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TRAGIC DRAMAS

FROM

SCOTTISH HISTORY.

HESELRIG. WALLACE.

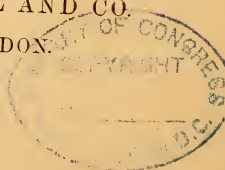
(SECOND EDITION.)

JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND.

Robert Buchanan

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.
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ADVERTISEMENT.

HESELRIG.

THIS Drama formed originally part of another, that which follows it in the present volume, the Tragedy of Wallace. Of that Tragedy it constituted the first or opening act. But as it extended the play to an inconvenient length, and as besides it possesses an independent unity of its own, while the event to which it relates has no direct bearing on the catastrophe of the tragedy of which it formed a part, it has been judged advisable to detach it from its original connexion altogether, and to present it as a separate Drama of Two Acts.

In the action of the drama some obvious liberties have been taken with exact chronology. Wallace, for example, is represented as being already Lord Warden, or guardian, of the kingdom. The precise time at which he acceded to this office is matter of dispute: but there can be no question that it was posterior to that at which the incident in his history that forms the subject of the drama took place. And while, no doubt, the private wrongs and losses which his family and himself had experienced at the hands of the English, and above all that crowning outrage, the murder of his youthful wife by the Heselrigs, gave exasperation and intensity to the hatred with which, as a Scotsman, he was

animated towards the invaders and oppressors of his country, it must not be inferred from the prominence unavoidably given to this element in the following drama, that it originated that sentiment in the breast of Wallace, or was required either to generate or to sustain it. Against Edward and his followers, who had made desolate his native Scotland, and were striving to reduce it to subjection as a conquered province, prompted by feelings of the purest patriotism he had already, even from his school-boy days, on many occasions and by many memorable acts, signalized his personal prowess, indomitable resolution, and inextinguishable hate.

In the drama that follows, accordingly—the Tragedy of Wallace—this element, the feeling of personal revenge, disappears from view as a spring of action altogether. It is never referred to as the prompter to any act, or the producer of any event, in the public career of Wallace. The individual sufferer has now merged in the patriot leader, the avenger not of his own wrongs, but of his country's.

WALLACE.

This Drama owes its publication, though not its composition, to the accident of the movement which took place in Scotland during the summer of 1856, for erecting a monument in honour of Sir William Wallace.

The sudden outburst of enthusiasm for the Scottish patriot, and all that relates to his eventful history, encouraged the author to hope that the interest, so glowing and so general, then felt throughout Scotland, for the subject of his drama, might win “a listening ear for an assuming song,” and enable him to cast his poet's mite into the treasury, in contribution to an act of national justice, laudable though late.

The work was accordingly printed in haste, on a sudden thought, and hurried through the press a few days before the great meeting at Stirling, on the 24th of June.

That in its construction and in its composition his performance is unworthy of its great theme—and in the hands of Shakspeare, what a theme!—the author is deeply sensible. Would it were worthier! But such as it is, he ventures to lay it reverently as his “stone on the cairn” of Wallace.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE SECOND EDITION OF WALLACE.

One moderately read in Scottish history cannot fail to be aware that the author has taken some liberties with chronology in the order of events as represented in the following drama.

He has antedated, for instance, the Wardenship of Wallace; the flight of Bruce from England; the battle of Roslin; and the slaughter of Comyn at Dumfries.

For these, and a few suchlike anachronisms, as well as for the version which, for dramatic purposes, he has adopted of one or two other facts that are in dispute, or in suspended acceptance among the writers of Scottish history, he pleads privilege and precedent as his justification. He was constructing a poem, not composing a history.

But a bolder and more questionable license is the part assigned by him to Joan de Valence in the action of the tragedy. For this he considers it right to state he has no warrant from authentic history, nor a hint, even, among the many apocryphal traditions so industriously collected, and recorded with an air of faith so undoubting, and a circum-

stantiality of detail so picturesquely minute, by the blind minstrel-chronicler in his *Metrical History of Sir William Wallace*.

A doubt having been expressed by one of his critics in a respectable journal, whether the following drama be in *form* what in *name* it professes to be, a *tragedy*; in regard to this point the author avails himself of the remarks of a friendly, a too friendly critic, in another journal. "Though in all conscience tragical enough, both in its course and in its close, this national drama is not constructed after the classic model, which exacts a rigorous adherence to the unities of time and place. It is rather a *historical life-drama*, so to speak, of the tragic kind. In this class of compositions, observance of the unities is out of the question; nor, sooth to say, has our author attempted this, but exercised his poet's privilege to its full extent. He has, however, scrupulously conformed to the remaining kind of unity which, even in compositions of this kind, cannot be dispensed with, unity of action. He seizes on the more important, or, artistically viewed, the most effective incidents in the career of Wallace. These he places before us in their most picturesque and dramatic forms of presentment, and all of them are, in a manner more or less direct, made conducive to the *dénouement* as co-efficients in causing or in quickening the catastrophe, the betrayal, capture, and execution of Wallace."—*Stirling Journal*, Tuesday, August 22, 1856.

Considerable alterations in the arrangement of the parts, as well as in the composition of the play generally, have been made in the present edition.

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HESELRIG:

An Historical Episode Dramatized.

IN TWO ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

ENGLISH.

HESELRIG, *Sheriff of Lanark.*
ARTHUR HESELRIG, *His Son.*
Officers, Soldiers, &c.

SCOTS.

WILLIAM WALLACE,	<i>Warden of Scotland.</i>
SIR JOHN DE GRÆME,	} <i>Friends and Associates of Wallace.</i>
BLAIR,	
BOYD,	
RICCARTOUN,	
AUCHINLECK,	
KERLE,	}
STEPHEN of Ireland,	
ELLEN BRADFUTE of Lamington,	<i>Wife of Wallace.</i>

SCENE—*The town of Lanark and immediate neighbourhood.*

ACT I.

Scene First.

A WOOD NEAR LANARK.

(*Enter WALLACE and SIR JOHN DE GRÆME, the former dressed as a peasant.*)

Græme. Nay, prithee, Wallace, humour me in this.
I'll share it with thee.

Wallace. Pardon me, De Græme ;—
In many a bloody field, shoulder to shoulder,
We've stood together, and I dare appeal thee,
If ever I declined thy help, or grudged thee
A comrade's half in danger or in glory.
But then the cause was public : this is private ;
It toucheth me alone as William Wallace.
And if I perish, that's but reason more
Why thou shouldst live. Scotland is not so rich
In honest men and true, that she can spare
The Græme and Wallace on a single venture.

Gr. But the attempt is mad. There's not in Lanark
Beldame or boy but knows Sir William Wallace.
The garrison is strong : its governor
Is Heselrig, thy deadliest enemy.

It ill befits thee, Scotland's Lord High Warden,
 To put thy life, and all for a boy's longing,
 Upon this desperate card,—a toying-tryste
 With some young light o' love. Ah, Wallace, Wallace!
 Eschew these Dalilahs; remember Perth.

Wall. I do remember Perth, and therewithal
 A woman's weakness and a woman's strength,
 Weakness betrayed, and mightier love that saved me.

Gr. When stung to frenzy by our late good fortune
 Our foe and would-be king, England's first Edward,
 Is posting northward with an host whose thousands
 O'ercrowd the Solway's sands, against poor Scotland,
 Blaspheming black revenge,—is this a time
 For love's light errandries? Bethink thee, Wallace,
 Thy life 's of too much value to thy country
 To be thus perilled for a wanton—

Wall. True :

But for a wife, what 's too much to be perilled?

Gr. Wife! Wallace! Thou'rt not married, art thou?

Wall. Ay!

And fast as love and love's pledged vow can bind me,
 And good man's prayers, though not with bell and book
 Muttered in holy walls, but under canopy
 Of greenwood tree, and for my wedding trim
 Bonnet of steel and mailed habergeon.

Gr. 'Tis known thou lov'st th' heiress of Lamington,
 Fair Ellen Bradfute, but I thought me ever
 'Twas only *par amours*.

Wall. Thou didst me wrong then.
 And Ellen more. The proudest peer in Scotland
 Durst not have woo'd her to unholy bed.
 In honest sort I loved, I woo'd, I won her:—

Blair gave the Church's warrant to our love ;
And Heaven approving, crowns them with its blessing,
In a sweet babe, repeats her mother's beauty.
My visits heretofore (and hence thine error),
Have been by stealth ; for Sheriff Heselrig,
Who slew her brother that he might bestow
Her hand and heritage upon his son,
Herds her with dragon's watch, vexing her ear
With hateful importunities, which hitherto
She has contrived to parry, under plea
Of mourning for her murdered relatives.
But her stern jailer brooks delay no longer :
He threatens violence. Thou know'st the man ;
His threat is ever surer than his promise.
But, Heaven to help ! this night unbars her cage.
In Edward's spite, in spite of Heselrig,
My captive linnet and her chick, to-morrow,
Shall carol freely in their native woods !
God keep thee, Græme ! and grant us merry meeting.

Gr. Amen, amen !

[*Exit* WALLACE.]

Gr. (Solus.) This business likes me not.
Curse on these love-traps ! Let the devil or Edward
Bait them with woman, like the simple school-boy
For a sour pippin ventures life or limb,
Wallace will into them. I'll to the Cartlans
And warn our friends ; we must be on the tiptoe
To watch the upshot. 'Tis a harebrain's venture.

Scene Second.

LANARK.

(*The Castle Gate. Two ENGLISH SOLDIERS looking over the wall near the gateway.*)

1 *Sold.* Mark Hubert, what a burly Scot comes here !
Didst ever look upon a broader chest,
A brawnier arm, a step more stalwart—free ;
What would King Edward give for such a soldier !

2 *Sold.* Now, by St. Cuthbert, 'tis a proper fellow !
Let's have some sport with him.

(*WALLACE enters advancing towards the gateway.*)

Hallo, Scots hound !

What name dost answer in thy kennel to ?

Wall. I'm Sandy Samson from the Upper Ward.

2 *Sold.* I will be sworn thou'rt o' that family,
If there be faith in thewes. I hope, good Samson,
Thou com'st not here to slay the Philistines.
Art thou a butcher, Samson, or a smith ?

Wall. Neither, Sir Englisher ; I am a miller,
Th' miller of Lamington. I pray thee, help me
To private speech with Mistress Ellen Bradfute,
The daughter of our umquhill laird, Sir Hugh,
And now our lady.

1 *Sold.* But, friend Samson, tell me

Where didst thou steal that goodly coat of green,
That thou art graithed in?

Wall. The good mutton grew it,
Fed on Scots grass; and the brave webster wove it,
Owned ne'er an English master.

1 Sold. Know'st thou, rascal,
Thy neck 's in danger for that rebel colour?
I'll make thee doff it; 'tis the badge of Wallace,
And all who wear't are of that outlaw's party.

Wall. Then, thro' broad Scotland are our bonny knowes,
Our sunny braes, our haughs, our birken shaws,
All of his party; they are graithed in green.

1 Sold. 'Ware thee of treason, master John a' Groats!
Dost thou forget the Sheriff Heselrig
Is governor of Lanark, and King Edward
Scotland's Lord paramount?

Wall. I've heard he says so.
I've also heard, there is some other king,
Who brags himself own brother to the moon;
I prithee, is King Edward of that family?

1 Sold. Thou rascal, Scot, would I were 'longside of thee!

Wall. Then let me in, and thou'lt be so belive.

1 Sold. I will: but, by St. Cuthbert! that fair whinyard
That's at thy girdle, and that's much too good
For such a loon, I'll break it o'er thy pate
The moment thou comest in.

Wall. God's will be done!
But let me in.

(The gate is opened. Scene changes inside the walls.)

1 Sold. (to WALLACE as he enters.)

Give me thy whinyard, rascal!

Wall. It is mine own.

1 *Sold.* And shall be mine. Who shall
Forfend it, Scot?

Wall. St. Fillan and this arm.

1 *Sold.* (*attempting to wrest it from him.*)
Thy whinyard, dog--slave--rebel!

Wall. Dog and slave!
Then, if I must, I must. Take this—and this—
And Wallace's goodwill and blessing with it,
That need no repetition.

(*First soldier falls.*)

2 *Sold.* Ho, comrades! fast the gates! Wallace is here;
The dog-wolf's in our trap.

(*Exit WALLACE into the town. Enter ENGLISH SOLDIERS.*)

Sold. A prize! a prize!
A bounty's on his head—I'll try for it.
Gold-salve for broken bones!

Other Soldiers.

And I! And I!

[*Exeunt after WALLACE.*]

Scene Third.

A STREET IN LANARK.

(*Enter WALLACE, followed by English soldiers whom he keeps
at bay, and who, on his offering to charge them, fall back
out of view.*)

Wall. There's no retreat this way. Must I to wall
And stand at bay, or carve me pass a thorough,

And make for earth elsewhere? Methinks ere now
 With this same tool I've switched a thicker hedge
 And made a gap in 't. Let me try. Ha! more of them!

(*Enter ARTHUR HESELRIG, with a strong party of soldiers.*)

A. Hesel. So thou art here at last! We have thee, outlaw.
 The lion's in the toils; the hide is ours.
 Surrender, Scot!

Wall. Surrender, Englishman!
 What! with this friend to boot (*waving his sword*), and not
 a scratch,

A skin-deep scratch, got from my hunters yet?
 The lion's hide is somewhat tough and tanned,
 Not soft and sleek as priestly Cressingham's;
 And he this day that would a belt of it,
 I give him well to wit must sweat for it;
 He'll count his pains more than his pennyworth.

A. Hesel. Ha! Cressingham! I thank thee for the watch-
 word!

It was a savage deed! Thy skin this day
 Shall dearly pay for Treasurer Cressingham's.
 Why stand ye thus aback? Advance and seize him!
 Are ye afraid?

Sold. 'Tis William Wallace.

A. Hesel. Were it Beelzebub,
 He is but one, and ye are full two hundred.

Wall. St. Andrew to the charge!

(*WALLACE rushes forward, HESELRIG and his men make a precipitate retreat across the stage. A casement opens, and a voice is heard from above*)—

Ho, Wallace! Wallace!

Wall. My guardian angel in mine Ellen's form—

Ell. Calls thee to sanctuary; haste, Wallace, haste!

(She beckons him earnestly towards the door of the house, which opens. WALLACE rushes in, and it is immediately closed. HESELRIG and his party rally, and return upon the stage.)

A. Hesel. Shame light upon ye, cowards! flee from one!
What will my father and Sir Robert Thorn
Say, when they hear of this? But where is Wallace?—
Wallace! I do believe it was the Devil!—
Where, how, did he escape? There is no outlet,
Yet seemed he flesh and blood.

1 Sold. I saw him enter
That doorway there.

2 Sold. And from the upper casement
A fair young lady beckoned him to enter.

A. Hesel. That door, fellow? It is impossible;
'Tis Ellen Bradfute's house of Lamington,
And no young lady lives there but herself.

1 Sold. I'll take mine oath on 't, sir, I saw him enter.

2 Sold. And Sir Hugh Bradfute was the friend of Wallace.

A. Hesel. Ha! true, he was—*(knocks violently, no one answers)*—helpers and harbourers both
The rebels, sire and son. Then force it, fellows!

(After considerable efforts the soldiers succeed in breaking open the door, but keep back as afraid to enter.)

The bravest follow me; the rest keep watch
That not a mouse may pass without your leave.

[Exit into the house with part of his followers.]

Scene Fourth.

THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE.

(Enter HESELRIG, ARTHUR HESELRIG, and other officers.)

Hesel. Impossible, Arthur! I'll not believe it.
Within the gates!—two hundred men—and Englishmen—
And yet escape!

A. Hesel. I fear 'tis even so, sir.
But how—when—where—within the walls of Lanark
There's not a rat's hole we have left unsearched.

Hesel. Our late misfortunes at Kinclaven Castle
And Stirling Bridge, have turned the rebels' heads;
And now 'tis rumoured publicly that Lennox,
The Douglas, and some other factious barons,
Met at the Forest-kirk, have chosen Wallace
Warden of Scotland. 'Tis a cursed chance!
Would I had been at home! The richest earldom
In all broad Scotland had been glad exchange,
In Edward's eye, for this one prisoner.—
But here 's the traitress—his accomplice, looks
The fawn, but is the fox—

(Enter ELLEN BRADFUTE, guarded by a party of soldiers.)

Demure hypocrisy!
Where hast thou hid the traitor? Answer quickly,
Or by this sword thou diest!

Ellen. I've hid no traitor.

Hesel. Where's William Wallace?

Ell. Blessed Heaven, I thank thee!

He is in safety.

Hesel. Thou avowest it, then?

And vauntingly thy treason?

Ell. I avow

My love for Wallace.

Hesel. What! Thy love for Wallace!

Thou brazen harlotry? dost thou proclaim thee

An outlaw's minion?

Ell. No, Sir Governor;

My love I own, but scorn thy commentary.

Hesel. Deceitful witch! thy life, thy lands, are forfeit;

Thy treason dooms thee to an instant death;

And instant thou shalt have it. Go make ready

(to an officer)

Straight for her execution.

A. Hesel. Sir, I pray thee,

Touch not her life. She has had wrongs from us.

Hesel. Wrongs! Foolish boy! thy love has turned thee
dotard,

Hadst thou the spirit of a man, thou'dst hate her.

Didst thou not hear her openly proclaim

Wallace thy rival, and exult that she

Had foiled thy search, and saved her paramour?

Ell. I do exult that I have saved my husband.

All. Thy husband!

Ell. Yes, my husband. I'm the wife,

Loving and loved, the wedded wife of Wallace.

I've saved his life with sacrifice of mine,

And count the ransom nothing.

Hesel. Hear'st thou that,

Sir lover? Art thou still her pleader? or
Hast itch o' the flesh defies the decalogue?

A. Hesel. Sir, I demand her instant execution.
I will myself conduct her, and make sure
She drees the doom her treason has deserved.

Hesel. A moment stop. Thy life, on one condition,
Is yet thine own. Reveal to me the place
Where Wallace is in hiding; bring me on him
On the unware attended. Do but this,
Thy forfeit life is thine. Nay more, do this,
Thou shalt, from kingly Edward, have reward
Befitting kingly hands. All this I promise
Upon my plighted honour as a knight.

Ell. Sir Governor, were Edward's self, thy king,
Queenless and young,—were he, with lowly suit,
To cast his sceptre at my feet, and proffer
His hand, his bed, his crown, on such conditions
I'd spurn the proffer and the profferer,
And cast on him the scorn I cast on thee.
Honour and knighthood! saidst thou? shame to both!
Would bid a wedded wife betray her husband!
O little hast thou known, and less deserved
A wife's fidelity, a woman's love.

Hesel. Away with her to instant execution!

Ell. I go, last victim of a murdered race;
Mine aged father, and my only brother,
With bloody hands already hast thou butchered,—
Me sparing only for my helplessness,
And sparing for a season. O my child!
Thou orphan's babe, too soon, I fear, to prove
An orphan's orphan, from thy race's blight
Heaven shelter thee, thou last surviving blossom

Of a once flourishing and goodly tree !
 And Wallace ! Wallace ! O thou gentlest heart
 That ever beat within its mask of mail,
 Till now divided by a double love,
 I set thee free, and make thee all thy country's.

Hesel. Away with her !

(She is carried off.)

Scene Fifth.

BARONALD WOOD NEAR LANARK.

(Enter DE GRÆME, BLAIR, BOYD, ADAM WALLACE of Riccartoun, AUCHINLECK, KERLE, and STEPHEN of Ireland.)

Gr. Nay, nay, be not impatient, Adam. Wallace
 Is wise as he is wight. He waits the gloaming,
 The lover's hour of theft as well as tryste.
 He is no novice at a love adventure :
 He's served, thou know'st, a Perth apprenticeship.

Riccart. Would that apprenticeship had lesson'd him :
 St. Johnstoun miracles are not for ever.
 Besides, 'tis past a doubt there's been some tumult
 In Lanark streets : and where fell fight or fray
 Where Southrons hive, and Wallace out of it ?
 I fear me all 's not well.

Auchin. Nay, Adam, nay,
 He knows we're not far off ; and were our cousin
 At deadly need, his bugle's blast would warn us—
 Let's near the walls, however—

(Passing Bell heard in the distance.)

Hark ! what's that ?

Riccart. The passing bell. Did I not guess aright?
That signal knells it for his execution.

Gr. Nay, all the saints forfend it, Adam! List!
(*Bell heard again.*)

Blair. The youth says true; that is the Sheriff's music,
Plays daily prelude to his butcheries.

Gr. The death-bell, say'st thou, Blair?

Blair. There's no mistaking it;
Some life doth pass but now.

Gr. O Wallace! Wallace! has it come to this?
Has that right arm, that from the tyrant's clutch
Wrested, in foughten field, a nation's liberties--
And that good sword, whose every sweep made room
At Stirling Bridge, hollowing a path for us
Through proud De Warrne's proudest chivalry--
Failed thee at need at last; and in a broil,
A petty broil like this?
Had I but followed thee, despite thy wish,
Perchance we might—at least we'd died together.

(*Bell heard again.*)

Riccart. Again, all is not over yet. To Lanark, friends!
To the rescue, all!

Gr. Too late, I fear, to the rescue,
But not to the revenge, Scotland's revenge
On Scotland's foe, most hated, most accursed,
On Heselrig, the murderer of Wallace!
[*Exeunt.*]

A C T I I.

Scene First.

NEAR THE WALLS OF LANARK.

(Enter DE GRÆME, &c. &c., as in the preceding scene.)

Gr. Mark yonder figure ! With a port erect,
 A firmer step did he but move, I'd say
 'T was Wallace self. It is ! Thank Heaven ! thank Heaven !
 'T is Wallace self. But what has stirred him thus ?
 Is he distraught ? With clenched hands upraised
 To Heaven in ecstasy now walks he forward
 Fiercely and hurriedly : and then, anon,
 Stops suddenly, and with his hands and mantle
 Covering his face stands motionless. Withdraw.—
 This is a grief whose utterness avoids
 Condolence or communion. Have we holy
 His passion's privilege, and unbespied.

(They retire.)

(WALLACE enters slowly, covering his face with his hands and mantle. He stands still, sobbing audibly ; then, by a strong effort recovering himself, he uncovers his face.)

No more ; no more ; O Ellen ! O my wife !
 My murder'd, martyr'd wife, who diedst for me !
 In tears of weakness, and of earthly dew,

Thou hast been wept enough. Thou shalt be wept
Henceforth in tears of blood! Ha! my friends here!

(Looking out.)

They must not see me thus; they must not know
How much in heart the Wallace is a woman.
I must assume the green and tranquil surface,
And hush the red volcano heaves beneath it.

(Advances to them.)

My friends!

(Crowding round him.)

All. Thank God, thou 'rt safe!

Gr. But where is Ellen Bradfute?

Wall. She 's dead!

Gr. Dead, didst thou say? Dead, Wallace?

Wall. Ay!

She has been done to death by Heselrig.

Did ye not hear her knell?

Gr. Merciful Heaven!

Young, helpless, orphaned! O wolf-hearted villain!

Thou shalt let blood for this.

Wall. He shall, De Græme,

(Grasping De Græme's hand eagerly.)

And that right sudden, too; or e'er the ghost

Of her he murdered can revisit earth

With her pale vision, to spell-blast his day

And haunt his night with horror.

Gr. Till 't be done

This sword in sheath, this head upon a pillow,

I swear shall never rest. But how befell it?

Wall. All thro' my rashness and fool-hardihood:—

I quarrelled with a soldier at the gate,

And drew a tumult on me—was discovered—

Pursued—surrounded—in extremity—
 When Ellen saw me, and with woman's love
 And prompt invention, beckoned me to enter
 The gateway of her dwelling. This defence
 She for a time, assisted by her women,
 Made good 'gainst my pursuers. The meanwhile
 I fled me to a well-known sanctuary,
 Which baffled all their quest. It was a vault,
 With cunning masonry, made for my safety
 In our first days of love : part of a monument
 Raised, with permission of the governor,
 By Ellen, to her brother's memory,
 Within her garden, by the city wall
 Where it is lowest, and some ancient oaks
 Throw a convenient shadowing over it.
 A garden ladder, on our nights of tryste,
 Hid 'mid the branches of the bushiest oak,
 Conveyed me thither.--
 O that this day I ne'er had entered it !
 For then, sweet Ellen, thou hadst not been murdered !—
 Her trusty maid came at the shut of eve,
 As we had fixed, to signal my escape.
 'Twas my wife's prayer (she said), that for this night
 I should not tarry, but go forth the walls.
 I questioned her of Ellen. She replied not,
 Till she had seen me safe without the walls,
 Then, bursting into tears, she told me everything.

(Hides his face in his mantle, overcome by his emotions.)

Gr. Let's to the west forthwith, summon our friends,
 'Leaguer the town, take it by main assault,
 And o'er the gateway, on the gallows-tree,
 Hang sire and son, these caitiff Heselrigs.

Wall. We 're quite enough to do the deed ourselves.
 The men of Lanark, as my guide reported,
 Clubbing in nooks, were muttering fearful curses,
 Ripe at a word to rise on Heselrig.
 She carries my instructions to their boldest.
 At midnight ladders will be laid for us
 At a set place, and brave hearts waiting us.
 Meanwhile, go snatch your soldier's hasty meal,
 'Twill be a busy night.

[*Exeunt all but Wallace.*]

Wall. Thus far, before my friends,
 I've played the Roman; but I can no more.
 O Ellen! art thou dead? Those lips that mixed
 Their rosy warmth with mine,—those eyes, alight
 With life and love, that beaconsed me to safety
 But two short hours ago,—all cold and quenched!
 And for a martyr's faith hast thou received
 A felon's doom? Out, thou avenging minister!

(*Drawing his sword.*)

While here I swear thou never shalt be sheathed
 In peace or mercy to these murderers:—
 That never shall I doff the trim of war—
 That never shall I press a wedded pillow—
 Never to Southron come to years of strife,
 Save priest or woman, shall I quarter give;—
 Never from Southron shall I quarter crave,
 Till Ellen be avenged and Scotland free:
 And Heaven so friend me as I keep this vow!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE SECOND.

LANARK—NIGHT—APARTMENT IN THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE.

(Enter HESELRIG disordered and partly dressed.)

Hesel. 'Twas horrible! I will no more to bed!
For worlds that dream I would not dream 't again!
That face so fair, so ghastly, ever beckoning me
On to the gallows-tree! Oh, every lineament
Hath trenched its likeness in my memory,
And it will never out! *(Shouting heard without.)*

Merciful heaven!
More horrors still! Is it the day of doom?

(Enter ARTHUR HESELRIG hastily.)

A. Hesel. O sir, are you up?—'t is time—we are betrayed—
The town's on fire: the citizens a-foot
And shouting vengeance.

Hesel. Saidst thou the citizens?

A. Hesel. I deem so; for I hear your name repeated,
And Ellen Bradfute's, mixed with yells for vengeance.
Ah! sir, that deed cries loud to Heaven against us;
I fear me we shall rue it.

Hesel. It is done, boy,
Nor must it stand in question. Rouse the garrison:
Summon Sir Robert Thorn to our assistance:
This house is strong: I've guards will keep at bay
The rabblement the while: haste by the secret postern.

[Exeunt.]

Scene Third.

THE STREET, IN FRONT OF THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE.

(WALLACE, *with a few followers, attempting to force the door, which is massive and resists their efforts.*)

Heselrig (from above).

Ho! what deray is this? What mean ye, villains?
Whom seek ye?

Wall. We seek hangman Heselrig,
To do the hangman's office on his neck.

Hesel. Ha! rascal! who art thou?

Wall. A knight of Scotland.

Hesel. Is it a knightly deed, thus like a felon
To steal upon us at the hour of sleep?
Is this an honourable deed of knighthood?

Wall. Talk not of honour or of knighthood, wretch!
Was it a deed of honour or of knighthood
To execute a woman? Pitiless coward!
That dipped'st thy butcher hands in innocent blood—
A woman's blood! Thou art not man but beast,
Nor hast a claim to human privilege.
Prepare for doom: I am thy victim's husband:
Thou hast thy choice,—in to thy byke and burn,
Or forth to render thee, and hang.

Hesel. Wallace! ha! (*Aside.*)
Render and hang! I am an Englishman,
An English knight, and dost thou talk to me,
Thou rascal Scot, of rendering and of hanging!

Wall. Felon thou art, a felon's death thou diest !
 Thy presence trebles that's in me of man,
 And thus I reach thy den—

(Bursting open the door and rushing in.)
 Now Ellen ! Ellen !

(Tumult heard within, clashing of swords, &c., WALLACE comes forth dragging with him HESELRIG disarmed and wounded.)

Hesel. I'm wounded,—dying ; whither wouldst thou drag me ?

Wall. Even to that gallows thou hast fed so fat
 With human holocaust, the blood of Scotland.
 Cruel and cowardly hath been thy life ;
 Thou must not grace it with a soldier's end :
 Murderer of Ellen Bradfute, to thy reckoning !

(As he is dragging HESELRIG across the stage, enter ARTHUR HESELRIG and soldiers.)

A. Hesel. Ha ! I am come in time. Rebel ! assassin !
 Unhand thy prisoner, and defend thyself.
 Father, I come—

Hesel. Arthur, thou comest too late
 To save my life. Oh, that horrific vision
 Is working its fulfilment ! But thou livest.
 Where is Sir Robert Thorn ?

A. Hesel. Roasted to death :
 His house a ruin, and himself a cinder !

Hesel. Then was that horrid dream in all its horrors
 True prophecy ; and thou too, Arthur—Oh ! *(Dies.)*

A. Hesel. Vaunt not thy triumph over those grey hairs,
 Vile Scot ! but turn thee to more equal combat.—

Thy flight once saved thee from this arm to-day :—
 Thou hast no Rahab now to harbour thee,
 Ellen of Lamington—

Wall. Is dead ! is murdered !
 One of her murderers lies there before thee.
 I thank his cruel providence, the gallows
 Is roomy, 'twill accommodate the other:
 O Ellen, this for thee !

(Rushes on ARTHUR HESELRIG ; they fight ; HESELRIG falls.)

A. Hesel. He hath struck home !
 Soldiers, avenge me ; seize upon the rebel !

(Enter SIR JOHN DE GRÈME, followed by a crowd of armed citizens.)

Gr. Seize on the rebel ! see the goodly crop
 Of rebels ye have reared, ye bloody Heselrigs !
 See how they troop, these grateful Lanarkers !
 Already they have set the Thorn a blaze
 To show their love to you ; and it burns bravely !

(Shouting without.)

Hark to these joyous shouts ! Had Ellen Bradfute
 A dirge like this ? so gay a funeral !

Wall. Dying or dead, off to the gallows with them !
 This tree that daily they made groan with victims,
 Let its last load be its own plenishers,
 Then burn the accursed wood, that nought remind
 Enfranchised Scotland of her servitude.

(English soldiers flee, followed by WALLACE, DE GRÈME, &c.)

Scene Fourth.

THE CROSS OF LANARK.

(Enter WALLACE, DE GRÆME, &c., attended by a crowd of citizens.)

Wall. O men of Lanark! ye have earned hereby
A glorious name among your country's worthies.
There's not a taskmaster draws brand or breath
Within your walls. But the usurper Edward
Is hasting on, with scores of Heselrigs,
Ready to rich you for the two are slain.
We must not here abide, nor to his mercy
Leave aught that has in it the blood of Scotland.
Bestow your helpless in some place of safety:
Our forests and our mountain fastnesses
Are still, thank God! our own: And while these mountains
Lift high to heaven their unsubjected brow,
Free as the wind that plays at list around them,
The land they look on shall be free—we swear it!—
Or but a garth of graves! All then can wield
Buckler and brand—all that have soul and sinew
To strike for Scotland's freedom, on with me
To the Torwood, where of our best and bravest,
With good Earl Malcolm, Comyn, and the Stewart,
Are met to give the invader Scottish welcome.
Go make ye ready. We shall meet ere long—

Remember, friends, Torwood's our trysting place ;—
And let our watchword be—

Citizens.

“ WALLACE AND LIBERTY ! ”

[Exeunt citizens.]

Wall. Once more, kind Blair, love's holiest task, the last,
Debarred myself, I delegate to thee—
My Ellen's bones to lodge in holy ground,
With holy rites, within Dunfermline's fane,
Where thou before didst lay my sainted mother.
My nephew Haliday, with Auchinleck,
Will be thine escort thither.

Come, De Græme,
One long last look at my poor murdered Ellen,
Then, Scotland ! I am thine, wholly and ever.

[Exeunt.]

THE END.

WALLACE:

A Tragedy.

IN FIVE ACTS.

HEU ! TANTO PRO CIVE CINIS, PRO FINIEUS URNA EST !
AT VALLÆ IN CUNCTAS ORAS, SPARGUNTUR ET HORAS,
LAUDES —

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

ENGLISH.

EDWARD I., *King of England.*
 AYMER DE VALENCE, *Earl of Pembroke.*
 RALPH DE MONTHERMER, *Earl of Gloster.*
 EARL OF HEREFORD.
 EARL OF LINCOLN.
 WINCHELSEA, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
 ANTHONY BEK, *Bishop of Durham.*
 SIR PETER MALLORY, *Lord Chief-Justice of England.*
 SIR JOHN SEGRAVE, *Acting Grand-Marshal of England.*
 SIR GEOFFRY HARTLEPOOL, *Recorder of London.*
 SIR ROBERT DE CLIFFORD.

SCOTS.

ROBERT BRUCE, *Earl of Carrick and Annandale.*
 SIR WILLIAM WALLACE, *Warden of Scotland.*
 SIR JOHN DE COMYN, *Earl of Badenach.*
 MALCOLM, *Earl of Lennox.*
 SIR JOHN STEWART, *Lord Bonkill.*
 MACDUFF, *Uncle of the Earl of Fife.*
 SIR JOHN DE MENTEITH.
 SIR JOHN DE GREME, MORAY, }
 LUNDY, LAUDER, BOYD, BLAIR, }
 RICcartoun, AUCHINLECK, STE- } *Friends of Wallace.*
 PHEN of Ireland, KERLE, and }
 DAVID WYLIE, }
 SIR JAMES LINDSAY, } *Friends of Bruce.*
 SIR ROGER KIRKPATRICK, }
 SIR ROBERT COMYN, *Uncle* }
 SIR JAMES COMYN, *Cousin* } *to the Earl of Badenach.*
 ABBOT OF CAMBUSKENNETH.
 RALPH HALIBURTON.
 JOHN M'AULAY (or SHORT), *Nephew of Menteith.*
 GILBERT GRIMSBY (or JOP), *A Scottish Herald.*
 FERGUS, *An attendant.*
Citizens, Soldiers, &c.

WOMEN.

MARGARET of France, *Queen of Edward.*
 JOAN DE VALENCE, { *Sister of the Earl of Pembroke, and*
Wife of Sir John de Comyn.
 ELSPETH WYLIE, *Wallace's Nurse.*
Attendant on Lady Comyn.

ACT I.

Scene First.

SLAMANNAN MOOR—THE ENGLISH ENCAMPMENT.

(KING EDWARD, PEMBROKE, LINCOLN, HEREFORD, BRUCE,
BISHOP BEK, *and other Leaders.*)

Edward (taking Pembroke aside).

Why, cousin Valence ! these are news indeed !
Disunion in their camp ! Bonkill and Wallace
At daggers drawn ! and Comyn working for us !
Scot though he be, thou think'st then we may trust him—
This brother-in-law of thine ?

Pembr.

We may and surely.

'Twas he advised Corspatrick where they camp :
'Twas he betrayed their purpose to surprise us,
Enabling us to turn upon themselves
The very stratagem they meant for us.
He feeds their quarrel covertly, and will
Withdraw his followers in their battle's need.
For hostage of his faith he's sent in pawn
His lady to our camp.

Edward.

My cousin Joan,

Thy sister ? Ha ! Then (*advancing to the other chiefs*) &
land's mine again !

And what is more than all, the traitor Wallace
Is trapped at last ; and for his many treasons,

His raids, his burnings, and his butcheries,
 For all the English towns his hands have sacked,
 For all the English blood his hand has spilt,
 He'll be repaid with royal usury !
 And for this land, damned with the primal curse
 Of thorns and thistles—fertile in nought but traitors—
 'Tis not enough to conquer, I must crush it :
 I'll trust no more to Scot or Scotsman's oath :
 Stone walls and English steel shall be my sureties.

Away, then, lords of England ! to your charge :
 Each captain to his post ! There are the Scots,—
 Let not one traitor of the breed escape you.
 Remember and repay the fields of Beg,
 Of Stirling, Stanmore, and Blackironside,
 The bloody barns of Ayr,—our slaughtered countrymen,
 Fenwicke, and Heselrig, and Cressingham,—
 And he, this day, who brings me dead or living
 (Proclaim it through the host), the outlaw Wallace,
 If he be yeoman, shall rise belted knight,
 If knight, an earl. Away ! and raise our war-cry,
 God and St. George for Edward and for England !

[*Exeunt.*

Scene Second.

FALKIRK MOOR—THE SCOTTISH ENCAMPMENT.

An open Tent.

(WALLACE, BONKILL, COMYN, LENNOX, MACDUFF, DE GRÈME,
and other Leaders.)

Bonk. Betrayed ! impossible !

Wall.

I fear we are.—

This very night I meant to have surprised them
 At Temple-liston : for I knew their fleet
 From France had anchored yesterday at Leith,
 Groaning with wine casks, and I hoped to find them,
 Drugged with the Gallic potion, all adoze,
 Unready for us. How they found us out
 I cannot tell : I fear me we're betrayed ;
 But here 'twere madness to abide them.

Bonk. Why ?

Wall. Because their number more than trebles ours—
 Because their archers and their men-at-arms
 Are many, ours but few. And on this heath
 There is no ground where valour joined to vantage,
 Might hope to equalize such fearful odds.

Bonk. What ! wouldst thou then, before our hooting foe,
 Full in his sight, these thirty thousand Scots
 Should turn their backs and flee without a blow ?
 I will not budge, not I ! Art thou afraid ?

Wall. (*smiling*). Afraid, Bonkill ? why, for myself per-
 chance

Not much : but for my country, yes ! My life
 Is mine, and if I rashly peril it,
 I peril but mine own : but rashness here
 Perils my country—perils many thousands,
 Whose life and safety on my conscience lie.
 Let us across the Forth.

Bonk. Across the Forth !

That we may fight at Stirling Bridge again ?
 Dost think that Edward, like that foolish priest,
 Will run into thy mouse-trap ?

Wall. No, Bonkill,

I do not think so. Edward's too ripe a general

To lend us vantage there, or lose it here.
 But on this heath where bush or rock is none
 To flank or fence them, can our hasty levies—
 Brave though they be—ill-armed and few in number,
 Hope to withstand the clouds of English archers,
 And mailèd horsemen on their barbèd steeds?
 Let's to our ridgy heights, our rocky passes;
 The forests and the floods as heretofore
 Will fight for us: and when occasion serves,
 We'll on these Southrons, and take brave revenge.

Bonk. Do as thou wilt: I came to fight, not flee:
 My brother's Brandanes, my own Foresters,
 Their blood is up: I've brought them to the ring—
 Dance as they may, I will not baulk their playing.

Wall. But, Lord Bonkill, ere thou resolve, consider—

Bonk. I have considered: this is my resolve—
 Flee those who will, I fight.

Comyn. And I.

Wall. Then you're resolved that on this very ground
 We will abide the foe.

Bonk. That's our resolve.

Wall. Alas! my Lords, I fear me we shall rue it.—
 But we are banded in a holy cause,
 And must not risk its marring by dissension.
 What little vantage this unsheltered moor
 May offer, let us turn it to account.
 Bonkill, thou seest yon space of level ground,
 In front defended by a deep morass?—
 Post thou thy Brandanes there: betwixt each schiltron,
 Filling the intervals with Ettrick bowmen.
 Meanwhile De Comyn with the horse—

Bonk.

But pardon me,—

Thou orderest us as one clad with authority,
Who leads our battle? Who's our general?

Wall. I am, Bonkill—

Bonk. Thou! thou our general!

And by what right, I pray?

Wall. In Baliol's right,

Our captive king, as Scotland's Lord High Warden.

Bonk. As Scotland's Warden! Who appointed thee?
Is't of thine own assuming?

Wall. No, Bonkill,

Nor of my seeking.

Bonk. Who conferred it then?

Wall. Scotland's free peers and knights.

Bonk. Assembled where?

Wall. At Forest-kirk,—Baliol has since confirmed it.

Comyn. But Baliol is not free. To Baliol's blood

I am the next of kin, his sister's son,

The rights derived from him, descend to me.

Bonk. The peers and knights of Scotland choose thee
Warden!

Where was my brother, Scotland's lord high steward?

Where was De Bruce, the high-born lord of Carrick,

And Annandale? Where was Sir John de Comyn,

The lord of Cumbernauld and Badenach?

Where was Macduff? Where were an hundred more,

The prime of Scotland's old nobility?

Were they at Forest-kirk?

Wall. Bonkill, they were not.

Bonk. Where were they then? Why had they not a voice?

Were they not cited?

Wall. No, they were not cited.

Bonk. Aha! I thought me so; and wherefore, pray thee?

Wall. Dost ask me where they were, and why not cited ?
They were in England part, and part at home,
On Scottish ground snug in their English castles !
They had forsworn allegiance to their country—
On bended knee proclaimed their servitude—
Before their angry God, their blushing country,
They had invoked damnation on their heads,
If e'er they took up arms against King Edward,
Scotland's Lord paramount and lawful king !
O no, they were not at the Forest-kirk—
And why they were not cited art thou satisfied ?

Comyn. Ha ! Dost thou taunt us with our forced submission ?

Bonk. And darest thou, upstart—dares a yeoman's grandson—

Wall. A yeoman's grandson !

Bonk. Ay ! a yeoman's grandson—

A very peasant, from his dunghill's hot-bed,
Shot up to rankness, dares he thus insult
The high-born peers of Scotland ? Dares he claim
The vaward of her battles ? Dares he thus—

Wall. Dares he, Bonkill ! I'll tell thee what he dares.
He bears his sovereign's signet : in that right
He leads his sovereign's battles, and to thee,
Proud peer ! no, nor to man of woman born,
Save to his king himself, Scotland's liege lord,
Will he that right resign.

Bonk. If thou be general,
Where are thy soldiers ? where thy following ?
Thou'dst play the eagle in thy borrowed plumage—
Whose are the feathers wherewith thou wouldst eagle it ?
Why yours—and yours—and yours ! Claim but your own,

The would-be eagle is a very owl—
The very owl i' the fable !

Wall.

No ; not so ;

Thou'rt but a lame expounder of thy text,
Nor know'st the true appliance. When the hawk
And royal eagle are abroad at prey,
The owl doth hide him in his castle hole
From danger and from day. But I have met
The English Eagle in his proud career,—
In his mid hour of passage and of pride,
In the full blaze of noon :—ay, met and mated him,
Where thou and thine, proud lord, durst not be seen.
Who was the owl and who the eagle then ?

Bonk. Where I durst not be seen ! Upstart and braggart—

Lennox. Lords, lords, I pray you, for the love of heaven—

Look to yon hill, whitened with English tents—
Look to yon sky, clouded with English pennons—
Look to yon glittering sea of naked steel,
Soon to be dimmed with the best blood of Scotland,
And bid for very shame your quarrels peace !
As for myself, all rights of rank and place
Abeyed, I'll follow any of the three,
For all I know are brave. But, lords, consider
(The question of the Wardenship apart)
The many claims of Wallace. He has rescued
His native land twice from the tyrant's grasp :
His very name is with the soldiery
A tower of strength, a watchword of success :
Let him but this one day—

Bonk.

No, Lord Lennox, no !

Not for one single hour. Thou, if thou wilt,
Follow this king of Kyle ; but here I swear,
While Stewart lives, he shall nor king nor warden it.

Lennox. The king of Kyle! for shame, unmannered Lord!

Wall. The jest is stale,—a branded traitor's gall—
A traitor made it, and a fool repeats it.

Comyn. A traitor!

Wall. Ay, a black, proclaimed traitor,
Thy brother-in-law, Corspatric of Dunbar.
Lords, ye have taunted me with lowly birth,
Ambition, arrogance,—I know not what.
All this I could digest, I could despise;
I have a witness in my bosom here
Doth clear me to myself—And to the world,
Behold my voucher on yon tented hill—
England's proud Edward—he can witness for me
A proffered crown could neither bribe nor dazzle me.
'Tis not a point of paltry precedence
I stand upon. Did pride alone gainsay,
I'd yield it readily;
For pride I would—for policy I dare not.

There's treason in the camp, and treason's dupes—

Bonk. Treason! whom darest thou accuse of treason?

Wall. Not thee, Bonkill: I know thou'st had thy cue—
I know thy prompter, and thy setter on;
He is the traitor—thou the wretched dupe—

Bonk. A dupe! ha! (*drawing his sword.*)

Wall. Put up thy sword, thou rash mis-tempered man;
Dost think I fear it? Ere this day be done
Thou'lt need it all: it will have work enough.

Græme. And work, I ween, there needs no tarrying for.
There sounds the summons to't.

(*Shouts, trumpets, &c., heard in the distance.*)

(*An Officer rushes in.*)

Off. My lords ! away !
The foe is on us.

[*Exit* DE COMYN.]

Bonk. All who will do battle
This day for Scotland and her liberties,
Away with me !—De Comyn and Macduff—

Macduff. De Comyn's gone.

Bonk. We will not lag behind him.

Macduff. I'll go with thee, Bonkill, tho' well I know
This madness hath undone us.

[*Exeunt* BONKILL and MACDUFF.]

(*Manent* WALLACE, LENNOX, DE GRÆME, MORAY, &c. *They regard each other for some time sadly and in silence.*)

Lennox. How dost thou think of this ?

Wall. O Scotland ! Scotland !

One glorious day had ransomed thee for ever :
But treason prospers, and a race of freemen
A foreign tyrant tramples into slaves.

Græme. I cannot think so harshly of these lords.

Wall. Comyn's a traitor, and Bonkill a madman !
Scotland is lost. If Comyn lead her army,
'Tis sold to Edward ; if Bonkill, 'tis slaughtered.
I must not follow them ; I will not flee :
From yonder height we may descry their battle.
We cannot bar defeat, but we may lighten it.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene Third.

FALKIRK MOOR.

(*Shouts, trumpets, &c., heard as of a battle. Enter BONKILL, with his sword drawn, wounded and supported by an officer.*)

Off. Alas! my lord, I fear you're hurt to death.

Bonk. O mind not me, but haste thee to Macduff—

Off. Macduff! my lord, alas!

Bonk. What! has he fallen?

Then to De Comyn with thy utmost speed,
And tell him—but why lookest thou thus? Has he—
Has he too fallen?

Off. Would to God he had!
His recreant heart planted with English arrows,
Even to its rotten core!

Bonk. What has he done?

Off. Even at the first assault, a sword unsoiled
A drop of blood undrawn, the dastard fled
With all his following.

Bonk. With all his following,
Saidst thou?—without a blow! A horrid light
Hath broke on me,—fool, driveller that I was
To be thus foully duped! O injured Wallace!
Would Heaven but lend me one day's life to do
Atone to thee, and on that traitor justice!

Off. O for one hour of William Wallace now!

Bonk. He must be found. Go tell him of my plight;
Say, with my dying breath I prayed his pardon,
My country's, and my God's; say, I conjured him,

By his own noble heart, by Scotland's safety,
 By Comyn's treason, and by Bonkill's madness,
 To bury for this day his wrongs, and succour
 The noble remnant of those Scots whom I
 In my dupe's dotage have consigned to slaughter.
 Away! away!

Off. And leave thee here to die!

Bonk. Think not of me; I would not suffer life;
 Death is my honour's sanctuary. Thy news
 Have braced me for one bloody bout the more.
 My gallant Foresters and Brandanes! Stewart
 Is with you yet, to lead you to revenge,
 And show you how to die! Away! away!

[Exeunt severally.]

Scene Fourth.

THE SAME—A RISING GROUND NEAR CALLENDER WOOD.

(WALLACE, LENNOX, DE GRÈME, MORAY, LAUDER, &c., as looking at an engagement in the distance.)

Gr. Bravo, stout Brandanes! well-fought Foresters!
 God and St. Andrew for the brave blue bonnets!
 Another charge! stand fast: look, Wallace, look,
 At yonder schiltrons showered on by English arrows,
 Like snow-drift on a rock! and that, beyond it,
 Ringed round and round by walls of living mail—
 England's hot chivalry,—see how they stand!
 Not Ailsa Rock itself more sternly steadfast!

Wall. But where's De Comyn? Where's the cavalry?

How can he leave them to be slaughtered thus !
 Our archers are destroyed ! Brave though they be,
 These schiltrons are not made of stone or iron,
 They are not butcher's blocks or armourer's anvils
 To be thus hacked and hewed and hammered on.

Gr. Hurrah ! the assailants are repulsed.

Wall.

Not so,

They're only out of breath. They but make way
 For fresh assailants. There they come by thousands !
 But, heaven and earth ! what flag is that ? Look yonder—
 The Lion Ramping on a field of Gold !

Lennox. I know it well—the royal flag of Scotland :
 It is the banner of Sir Robert Bruce.

Wall. Of Robert Bruce ! shame on the unnat'ral parricide !

Gr. O Wallace ! Wallace ! look ! Alas ! my countrymen ;
 Would I were in the midst of you ! They yield ;—
 They're broken—slaughtered—flying—followed.

*(WALLACE and DE GRÈME regard each other for a moment
 sadly and in silence.)*

Wall. O traitor Comyn ! and hot-headed Stewart !
 But 'tis no time to rail. *(Turning to his followers.)*

Ye true-born Scots,
 Who still have followed Wallace and his fortunes
 In sunshine and in storm ;
 Who have held fast your freedom and your faith
 In bloody fields, through ban and beggary,
 Our wrongs must not be dearer than our country ;
 We must not see our brothers basely butchered
 For Bonkill's folly or for Comyn's treason.
 Through yonder host we needs must cut our way
 To the Torwood. Wo to the traitor Bruce,

And Durham's bloody priest! On to the rescue!
To save our gallant countrymen or perish!

(*They rush out. By and bye, shouts of A WALLACE!
A WALLACE! are heard.*)

Scene Fifth.

CALLENDER WOOD—A GLADE NEAR THE NORTH-WESTERN
EXTREMITY OF THE WOOD.

(WALLACE, RICCARTOUN, KERLE, *with a few followers. Enter
to them STEPHEN of Ireland.*)

Wall. Hast thou seen aught of them?

Steph. The brave Earl Malcolm,

With Moray, Seton, and the other chiefs,
Have led the gallant wreck across the Carron,
And they are safe upon the farther height
Doth overlook the ford.

Wall. Our task is done then,
And we may after them. But where's De Græme?
I have not seen him since I turned aside
To stanch the wound the Bruce's falchion dealt me.

Riccart. Just at that moment, 'mid a hill of slain,
He spied the body of Macduff—

Wall. Macduff!

Alas! the hero of Blackironside!

Riccart. And some ten paces in advance of it,
Walled round with English dead, gory and gashed,
Life scarce extinct, the body of Bonkill—

Wall. O Stewart! Stewart! thou hast paid full dear
For all thine errors. Peace be with thy soul,
Thou noble Scot! thy faults were of the head,
Thy heart was honest, as thine arm was brave.

Riccart. At this De Græme,
Shouting revenge, rushed 'mid the Southron ranks,
Among whose thousands, Lauder and himself
Soon disappeared.

Wall. In evil case, I fear.
On to the rescue!

(Enter LAUDER hurriedly, his sword drawn and bloody.)

Lauder, where's De Græme?

Laud. Where we can yield him nothing but revenge;
The gallant Græme is slain!

All. Slain!

Laud. Ay, look there;
His slaughterers are fast upon my traces.

Wall. Oh, I could weep! but that must be hereafter;
'Tis now a time for doing.

(Enter Sir BRIAN LE JAY, and a party of English soldiers.)

Sir Brian. Wallace, render thee;
Macduff, Bonkill, are slain; Sir John de Græme—

Wall. Is not yet cold; and thou, thou traitor templar!
Shalt be a corse before him.

(Rushes on Sir BRIAN; they fight; LE JAY is slain.)

O De Græme!
Rescue I may not, but I shall avenge thee.

*(Rushes out after the English soldiers, followed by RICCARTOUN,
LAUDER, KERLE, and soldiers shouting, A GRÆME! A
GRÆME! &c.)*

Scene Sixth.

EDWARD'S TENT NEAR FALKIRK.

(EDWARD, PEMBROKE, LINCOLN, HEREFORD, BEK, and other
English chiefs at table; one seat unoccupied.)

Edw. The day has been a bloody but a glorious—
Welcome, my lords, I trow our banquet needs
No costly condiment to relish it :
'Twas bravely earned, enjoy it merrily.
I miss but one : Lord Bishop, where's thy colleague ?
We're much his debtor—Oh, here comes the Bruce.

(*Enter BRUCE hastily, as if just returned from battle. After
bowing respectfully to EDWARD, he sits down in the vacant
seat, and begins to eat. PEMBROKE whispers something to
the other lords, who laugh simultaneously.*)

What moves your mirth, my lords ?

Pemb. We laugh to see
De Bruce eat his own blood,—lap Scottish blood—

Bruce. Lap Scottish blood ! Would'st thou insult me,
Pembroke ?

Pemb. Look at thy bloody hands ; they're all unwashed ;
Dost not lap Scottish blood at every mouthful ?

Br. (starting up). De Valence, dare but to repeat that
taunt—

Edw. Nay prithee, Bruce ; De Valence, thou'rt to blame ;
'Tis but a foolish jest. Camps are not courts,
And well may Bruce dispense with ceremony.
His noble deeds, this day, have won him right,

Washed or unwashed, to eat at Edward's table,
An honoured and an ever welcome guest.

(BRUCE bows respectfully to EDWARD. Then aside.)

Eat my own blood! lap Scottish blood!—too true!

Edw. Our victory is complete. The rebel chiefs
Slain in the action, as this roll informs me,
Are many and of note. But one is wanting;
And he of all the most expected, Wallace.
Know ye aught of the traitor?

Br. He's escaped.

Edw. Then lacks our victory its crowning cope.—
But ho, for Stirling! there we'll celebrate,
In flowing cups, the glorious fight of Falkirk;
And be this day—St. Mary Magdalene's—
Remembered in our feasts, and writ a day
Auspicious in our English calendar!

[*Exeunt all but BRUCE*]

Br. Lap Scottish blood! And do you taunt me thus,
And thus repay me this day's services,
Proud lords of England? Eat my own blood, said ye?
And yet, perchance, 'twas but my jealous guilt
That turned an innocent jest to bitterness,
And lent it scornful meaning. But no, no!
What they have charged in sport, I've done in verity.
That thought, a scorpion's sting plants in my memory
Its wound, envenomed, and immedicable!

How I escaped I know not; for I fought
With desperate recklessness to quash the thoughts
That ever and anon rose as I viewed
The glorious handful of my countrymen
Melting away before the Southron's steel,

Like their own winter snows upon Ben Nevis,
Before midsummer's sun. Alas, my father !
Thine hostage son has earned thy safety dearly !
I'll take one last look at that fatal field,
Where Scotland's freedom, and where Bruce's honour
Perished together.—But who comes this way ?

(*Enter SIR JAMES LINDSAY.*)

Ah ! Lindsay !

Lind. I have come, my lord, in haste
To seek thee. My good lord of Annandale—

Br. Ha ! what of him ? Thy face is dressed in sadness ;
Surely the tyrant Edward has not dared—

Lind. Thy noble father is beyond the reach
Of tyrants and of tyranny,—he's dead.

Br. Dead ! saidst thou, Lindsay ? Dead ! when died he ?

Lind. But three days since.

Br. Three days ! only three days !
Oh, would it had been sooner !

Lind. Sooner, my lord ?

Br. Ay, sooner ! Would he had been in his grave
A year—a month—a week—then had I been
Happy !

Lind. Happy, thy father in his grave !

Br. O Lindsay, think not harshly of my words,
They have a meaning, not a guilty one.
I loved my father, and I do lament him,
As should a loving son an honoured sire.—
But I am sick at heart. Let's to yon field,
Red with the life's-blood of our native Scotland :
'Tis a fit place for that which I would learn,
And would impart to thee.

SCENE SEBENTH.

PART OF THE FIELD OF BATTLE BELOW FALKIRK.

(Enter WALLACE, LENNOX, LAUDER, RICCARTOUN, KERLE, &c.)

Lauder. 'Twas somewhere near this spot.

Riccart. Yonder's a heap of slain. The gallant Græme
Would not have perished without company.
Alas! he's here. There is the fatal opening,
Where, thro' the faithless harness from behind,
The recreant pierced him.

(WALLACE, *rushing forward, throws himself on the body,—
covers his face for some time with his hands,—then rises
and stands, sorrowfully contemplating the corse.*)

Wall. And is this all that doth remain of thee,
Thou noblest, bravest Scot! O gallant Græme,
The gentle and the good! Woe's me, my brother!
My twin in counsel—my right arm in battle—
My loving rival in the field of fame—
My bright example in the path of honour!
Thou flower of knighthood and true nobleness!
Th' unchanging friend, the honourable foe;
The frankly wise, the mercifully brave!
Thou lover of thy country and her cause,
Without one thought of self! With thee, to boot,
Wallace had stood for Scotland's liberties
Against the world! But now that thou art gone,
I am but half myself. Pardon me, friends!

There lies the brother of my soul, the friend
 That, in my worst of fortunes, ne'er forsook me ;
 My help and comforter ; to whom the Wallace,
 Outlaw or Warden, was alike the same !
 Though I began the war, with equal arm
 He wrought the rescue of our mother-land.
 Bear hence his honoured corse. With all the rites
 Of love and honour, that the time admits of,
 Blair will consign to dust the noblest clay
 That Scottish spirit ever tenanted.

(RICCARTOUN, LAUDER, *with some other chiefs, bear off the
 body, WALLACE and LENNOX following.*)

Scene Eighth.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD OF BATTLE NEAR THE RIGHT
 BANK OF THE CARRON.

(*Enter BRUCE and LINDSAY.*)

Br. Lindsay, my heart is sick. At every step
 I tread on slaughter'd countrymen, whose eyes,
 Though fixed in death, do seem to glare on me,
 As on their murderer, whose stiffened lips
 Seem curled to scorn as I, their countryman,
 Their king and enemy, do pass them by.
 I cannot bear it longer : let's away ;
 The thoughts are working in my guilt-struck soul
 Shall one day live in action.

Lind.

Hush, my lord !

Look, who are these that march in sad procession,
Bearing a corse?

Br. Belike the followers
Of some brave Scot, slain in this murderous *melée*.
Ha! well I know them all! There is the Wallace,
There good Earl Malcolm, there Sir Andrew Moray,
Sir Chrystal Seton, Lundy, and Riccartoun,
Sir John de Ramsay, Lauder, Boyd, and others,
The choice of Scotland's sons. Alas! alas!
Why is not Bruce among them? Let's retire
Till they have crossed the stream.

(They retire.)

(Enter the procession. It passes across the stage. WALLACE and KERLE are last. They pause in crossing the stage.)

Wall. Pardon me, Kerle, that on this busy day
I have forgot to thank thee for thy love;
And for the life I owe thee, when my steed,
Wounded and worn, sunk on the field beneath me,
And left me in my reckless rage alone.

I've lost one friend, my heart doth cling the closer
To those I've left. Oh, many a deed of love
Thou'st done for me! May Heaven reward thee tenfold!
For Wallace never can.

Kerle. Speak not to me of thanks or of reward,
My ever-honoured lord. To see thee safe
Is all the thanks I covet: and my prayer,
When Wallace dies, to perish by his side.

(WALLACE grasps his hand affectionately. Exeunt. The procession re-appears on the opposite bank of the Carron, at this spot a narrow and rocky stream. BRUCE and

LINDSAY *come forward on the side which the procession has left. As WALLACE and KERLE pass on the opposite bank, following the procession which has disappeared, BRUCE hails WALLACE across the stream.*)

Bruce. Who goes there?

Wall. A man.

Br. Ay, and a brave one,

As thou hast proved this day. We've met before—

Wall. We met at Irvine, and—we've met at Falkirk.

Br. Thou tauntest me: I fear thou deem'st me light.

Wall. This day I found thee heavy. Thou hast left

Thy mark on me.

Br. Wilt thou some brief moments

Vouchsafe me speech? Thou seest I'm unattended,

Save by a single friend, and he will leave us.

Wall. Pass on, I pray thee, Kerle (*exit KERLE*), and now
Sir Earl.

Br. Lindsay, withdraw a space.

[*Exit LINDSAY.*]

(WALLACE and BRUCE *approach each other at the narrowest part of the brook.*)

Br. Wallace, I have just cross'd that bloody field;—

'Tis a sad sight; it's made my heart to ache.

Wall. And well it may: for mine it's made to grieve
Almost to bursting,—albeit I'm no traitor,
Nor carry on my soul the load of parricide.

Br. Thy speech is bitter.

Wall. Bitterer is thy guilt.

Br. When will these wars have end?

Wall. When Scotland's free,
When thou art honest, and when Edward's dead.

Br. Why wilt thou shed the blood of gallant men
Upon this desperate quarrel? Take the terms
That Edward offers. Own him the liege lord
Of Scotland, and be under him her king.

Wall. I, king of Scotland! I, king Edward's bondsman!
And this from thee!

O thou degenerate and bastard Bruce!

Baliol was weak, but thou art infamous!

Why do I shed the blood of gallant men?—

And doth the devil preach! On yonder bier

(Pointing to the procession,)

Lies one whose worth to equipoise, thy master

Edward, with all his host of titled slaves,

Were gossamer to gold.

Who shed his blood? From whom doth weeping Scotland

Ask back her noblest son? From Robert Bruce!

Thou renegade! devourer of thine own!

Did I but meet thee in the battle-field—

As soon God send I shall—I swear I'd liefer

Plunge this Scots whinyard in thy felon breast,

Than in the heart of Turk or Saracen.

Br. Ha! who is he whose blood thus passionately

Thou chargest on me? In the eyes of Wallace,

Who was the first of Scots?

Wall.

He was, indeed,

The first of Scots—of men! Alas, de Græme!

That thou shouldst fall, while Bruce and Comyn live!

Br. Ha! Græme! Sir John de Græme! and has he fallen

O noble Græme! would I were in thy place,

And thou this day alive! I can no more—

O Wallace! Wallace! I am sick at heart.—

I have been meshed in toils devised in hell,

By holy bonds linked to unholy cause,
An hostage for my father : but at length
That bond is snapped asunder,—freed himself,
Mine honoured father makes his son a freeman !

Wall. Ha ! freed himself ! what doth thy riddle mean ?
Thy noble father, Bruce of Annandale—

Br. Is free ; for he is dead—

Wall. Dead ! dead ! when died he ?

Br. I have but learned it not an hour ago :
Would I had learnt it ere this fatal day !

(Covers his eyes with his hands.)

But now at last I draw a freeman's breath,
And feel myself mine own. Before high heaven,
Before these glorious mountains, and thyself,
The blessed bulwarks of my country's freedom,
I swear this sword shall never more be drawn
Against my native land.

Wall. O Bruce ! were I assured of thy sincerity—

Br. Of my sincerity ! and dost thou dare—
Does mortal man dare to distrust the oath
Of Robert Bruce ? Alas ! forgive me, Wallace.—
The world and thou have had too fatal cause
To hold me light,—but time will do me justice.

Wall. It shall. I do believe thee ! O de Bruce,
This very day, this very hour, abandon
The tents of tyranny, and join thine own.

Br. No, not to-day ;
My oath is holy, even tho' plight to one
Who minds no oath himself. It must be kept ;
But never more shalt thou, in battle-field,
See Robert Bruce in arms against his own.
And should the tyrant, when my term is out,

Fail his repeated pledge to yield me up
The crown of Scotland on a freeman's brow,
Free to be worn as e'er my fathers wore it—
Then I repeat my oath—
Leader or follower, as my country wills,
To cast my lot with yours, and, till she's free,
Never to sheathe this sword against her enemies!

Wall. O thou eventful day in Scotland's story,
Ever to be remembered!—

Dark was thy morning, dismal was thy noon,
But glorious is thy setting! Worthy heir
Of princely Huntington, let William Wallace
Be the first Scot to do thee fealty.
Behold, I kneel to thee, who never knelt
To mortal man before. Hail, king of Scotland!
And as to her thou provest true or false,
May Heaven for weal or wo remember thee!

Br. Amen!—and, when I prove a traitor to her,
Do thou, her glorious champion and avenger,
Rip from this bosom, with thy patriot steel,
The foul inhabitant that tenants it.—
But night steals on, and I have much to commune
And counsel with thee, ere I join the tyrant.—
Where shall we meet to-morrow?

Wall. At the chapel
Of Dunipace hard by, at this same hour,
I will attend thee. The good parson Wallace,
Mine uncle, will assure us privacy.

Br. Be't so; God keep thee till we meet to-morrow.

[*Exeunt*

ACT II.

Scene First.

TORWOOD.

(*Enter JOAN DE VALENCE [LADY COMYN], and a female attendant.*)

Attend. O dearest Lady, I dare go no farther.
This is a fearful place ! The gloom of midnight
Broods, even at noon-day, o'er these horrid woods !
The silence and the solitude affright me.
Let us return ; what if some savage bandit—
For who but bandits can inhabit here—
Should light upon us !

Lady C. 'Tis my very prayer ;
For he would lead us to the man we want.

Att. But what could we, two feeble, helpless women,
Against their violencé—

Lady C. Oh, fear not that.—
The bandits of these woods are chivalrous,
And will not harm a woman. With the tongue
Of England, had we English bills or beards,
There were some danger then ; but we are safe ;
For William Wallace is the Torwood's king,
He and his knights do not make war on women.

Att. But should thy lord hear of this mad adventure?

Lady C. E'en let him. If my purpose speed, I care not;
And if it fail, I'll make Sir John de Comyn
My debtor for the service I can render him.

Att. What if thy hate to Wallace—

Lady C. Hate to Wallace!

Att. Dost thou not hate him, then? I thought thy love
Was turned to deadly hate.

Lady C. I thought so too,
And acted madly on the faith of it.
When he, with ice-cold courtesy, refused
The love, the hand, that in my passion's fever,
My sex's coyness, and my royal blood,
Forgotten and abased, I tendered to him,
Mistaking rage for hate, I married Comyn,
His deadliest enemy. Selfish and cunning,
A blazoned traitor, a suspected coward,
O how unlike the hero of my dreams,
And of my heart! My scorn for Comyn's baseness
Adds daily fuel to my love for Wallace,—
Till I can hold no more. For this last effort
The time is apt, for I can render Wallace
Service none other can.

Att. Ha! there's a cottage,
Couched like a nest in yonder wilderness
Of birch and briars.

Lady C. 'Tis the place we want—
His nurse's cottage; let us enter it.

[*Exeunt into the cottage.*]

Scene Second.

THE SAME. NEAR WALLACE'S OAK.

(Enter WALLACE hastily, followed by LADY COMYN.)

Lady C. O Wallace, hear me !
Behold me kneel—

Wall. Lady, for shame, arise !
Bethink thee of thy sex, thy blood, thy husband—

Lady C. My husband !—and who is that husband, Wallace ?
Thy deadly enemy.

Wall. But he's thy husband.

Lady C. Thy country's enemy as well as thine !
Did he not play the coward and the traitor
At Falkirk ?

Wall. But he fought at Roslin moor
Like a true Scot, bravely and gloriously.

Lady C. Did he not thrust thee from the Wardenship,
That he might seize 't himself ?

Wall. My purposes
Were misrepresented, and I did resign it.

Lady C. He has resigned it too ; but not like thee ;
He's made his peace—a golden peace—with Edward.

Wall. Resigned the Regency ! it is not possible—

Lady C. And sworn allegiance to the English king,
As the liege lord of Scotland ! for the which,
Of Edward's gratitude, one-third of Scotland
Doth own him lord.

Wall. One-third of Scotland, saidst thou ?

Lady C. The lands of Ellerslie—

Wall. The lands of Ellerslie !

Lady C. Of Riccartoun, of Lamington, the earldoms
Of Lennox and of Galloway—

Wall. Of Lennox
And Galloway ! O the insatiate Judas !

Lady C. Thou art excepted from the amnesty ;
A price set on thy head ; proclaimed an outlaw—

Wall. That's but a trifle to the rest—

Lady C. With spies,
With hired assassins, bought with Comyn's gold,
Thou art beset. It was from one of them
I learned the very hour, the very spot,
Where I might find thee.

Wall. For thy husband, lady,
He is my foe, for that he is my country's ;
And in the open field, or open council,
With mortal challenge, I would tell him so :—
Other revenge, 'gainst him, I know nor seek not.
As for my life—

Lady C. It hangs upon a breath,
Each moment perils it ; thou canst not count on't,
Not for a single day. My brother Pembroke
Is high in favour with my cousin Edward :
He loves me well :—let me but call thee husband,
Thou'lt be no more, amid these savage woods,
A hunted outlaw ; Pembroke will yield to thee
The regency ; say but the word, thine enemy
And mine, de Comyn, is no more—

Wall. O lady, lady ! what are Comyn's crimes
To those, in damning dreams, thou dalliest with ?
Were William Wallace caught with baits like these,
He were not now a dweller in these woods.

I've told thee, ere to speak with thee was sin,
To woman's love this heart was closed for ever.

Lady C. Think not to dupe me with a tale like that.
Thy bosom closed to woman's love—indeed !
Was it so cold to woman's love at Perth ?

Wall. Lady, for shame !

Lady C. Or when thou stolest at the midnight hour
To Ellen Bradfute !—

Wall. In the name of Heaven
I charge thee, peace !—Thou'st named the name of one
Who is a saint in heaven :—nor must thy lips,
Hot with unholy breath, blaspheme her purity.
Thy secret's safe :—but for thine honour's sake,
Thy sex's, and thy blood's, haste thee from hence.
Till thou hast passed the limit of this wood
Thy safety is assured.

[*Exit* WALLACE.]

Lady C. O Wallace, hear me !
Thou wilt not :—he is gone :—and I am left
To scorn and to despair—left with the soil
And sting of guilt without the benefit !

Come, deadly hate ! deadliest in woman's soul
When thou art born of love,—and with revenge,
The sweetest passion after love, let love,
Soured into gall, possess and quicken me.

[*Exit.*]

Scene Third.

CAMBUSKENNETH ABBEY, NEAR STIRLING.—THE CHAPEL.

(In the background of the Scene, the Abbot at a Table, employed in copying a document. In the foreground, BRUCE and COMYN.)

Comyn. But must thou hence so soon?

Bruce. This very night

I must join Edward ere he cross the border;
For he is jaundiced o'er with jealousies,
And will mistrust me else. My brother Edward
Remains in Scotland:—he has my instructions:—
Carrick and Annandale will rise with him
When we are ripe.

Abbot. (coming forward)—

The writings, lords, are ready;
Are ye prepared to seal, and swear to them?

Both. We are.

Abbot. Then, reverently, by yonder holy rood—

(pointing to the crucifix)

The blessed symbol of your hopes, ye swear
To faithful keeping of this bond?

Both. We swear.

Abbot. Then vouch it with your seals.

(They seal. The Abbot then rolls up the two parchments and delivers a copy to each.)

Br. My good lord Abbot,
We are thy debtors largely:—the meanwhile
Keep this our secret.

Abbot. 'Tis buried here, in as deep sacredness
As in your proper breasts; and every day
My prayers shall visit heaven, and be importunate
For your success.

Br. Thanks, thanks, kind Abbot, for the present, thanks,—
The time may come when we more worthily
May recompense thy love, thanks and farewell.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

My furlough's brief, I must to horse forthwith.
I need not counsel thee,—for thou art wise,
To wary walking in these slippery times:—
But, noble Comyn, by that sacred bond,
Now booked in heaven, that seals our brotherhood
Of interest and affection, with a brother's eye,
Watch, I conjure thee, o'er those faithful few,
Lord Lennox, and the rest, who have not crooked
The knee to Edward, and without a home,
Beggared and banished, make their savage lair
Where foxes cub, or eagles build, contesting
With wolves and wild-cats, the dank overlay
Of some foul den. Spread over them the shield
Of thy large influence:—Save them from the blood-hounds
Of thy proud brother-in-law:—Their worth outvalues
All reckoning:—and they are, next to Heaven,
Our main dependance and expectancy.

And William Wallace,—there's some feud betwixt you,—
It must not be, you must be reconciled.

Comyn. Wallace!—Thou know'st him not:—he is intract-
able,
Proud, over-bearing, not amenable
To counsel or command.

Br.

But he is valiant:

His single arm's an host :—his very name
Will sanctify our cause i' the general eye,
And win us hearts and hands. Besides, already
He's privy to my plan—

Com. Ha !—surely, Bruce,
He knows not of our pact this day—

Br. He knows
Only my purpose to reclaim my own :—
And he has sworn to aid me with his sword.

Com. Well, be it so :—and since it pleases thee,
I will submit me to his proud caprices,
And woo his fellowship.

Br. I thank thee, Comyn.
And now, farewell. When we do meet again,
I trust it shall be on some glorious field,
Where, busked in steel, for Scotland and her cause,
We'll slip the lion on the leopards' neck,
And gorge him with their blood.

Com. Farewell, de Bruce,
And Heaven preserve thee to achieve thine own.

[*Exit BRUCE.*

(*COMYN takes out a letter, which he reads—then walks about thoughtfully.*)

Fortune, I thank thee !—thou hast timed this well—
The throne is vacant :—
My uncle Baliol, and my simple cousins,
Have for themselves renounced it. In my way
Lie two impediments—Wallace and Bruce,—
The sword of Wallace, and the rights of Bruce.
For Bruce, his hopes are in this parchment coffined.—
This damning document in Edward's hands,
Will be his death-text, glossed with my commentary

That I but signed it to hoodwink de Bruce,
 And serve King Edward's cause. The line of Bruce
 Attainted or extinct, I follow next.—
 My wife is Edward's cousin. Should all fail,—
 Edward is old, and I can wait my time —
 The second Edward takes not of the first.—
 And as for Wallace——Ah! (*looking out*) here cometh one
 Brings me, I think, good tidings touching him. [*Exit.*]

Scene Fourth.

THE SAME.—OUTSIDE THE ABBEY WALLS.

(COMYN and HALIBURTON meeting.)

Com. Well, Haliburton, whether hast thou brought me
 The carcase or the head?

Hal. Neither, my lord.

Com. The devil!

Hal. The devil, indeed :—he has some devil's charm
 For lith and limb,—for they are danger-proof.

Com. Again escaped !—How chanced it?

Hal. Having tracked him
 To his aunt's house, the lady Auchinleck's,
 I chose me, from the garrison of Lanark,
 Twenty stout horsemen, all well-armed and mounted,
 And sped to Gilbank.—But he had been warned,
 And fled at our approach to th' Cartlan craigs.
 We followed hard, and closed him in a nook
 Whence there was no retreat, as he must needs
 Have sprung the precipice, or turned upon us.

On one side of this angle stretched a chasm
 Of fearful depth,—and full five paces broad :—
 He spurred his steed, and cleared it at a bound !
 We stood amazed, and durst not follow him :—
 And, as we doubled its extremity,
 He rushed upon us, and with giant strength,
 The foremost two, horsemen and horse together,
 He hurled them down the horrible abyss :—
 Then, rushing forward some few paces farther,
 He cheered his steed, and took the leap himself !—

Com. Was he not dashed in pieces ?

Hal.

Far below,

In bloody patches on the crags and bushes,
 We saw the mangled relics of our comrades,
 The birds of prey already over them,
 Screaming their horrid carnival.

Com.

But Wallace—

But where was Wallace ?

Hal.

He had chosen his place,

And lighted on a green projecting knoll,
 That hung self-balanced, as it seemed, in air,
 Midway the sheer descent.

Com.

Was he not hurt then ?

Hal. His horse was killed—but Wallace seemed unin-
 jured ;

For on this island crag, showed inaccessible
 But to the eagle's wing, he stood and taunted us,—
 Vowing, ere Yule, he'd make us pay right dear
 For the good steed we'd cost him.

Com.

Is he still

In Cartlan, know'st thou ?

Hal.

No : he haunts hard by

I' the Torwood—I know his hiding-place,
And will this time make sure.

Com. I pray thee do—
Remember our agreement. When thou bring'st me
Wallace, alive or dead, the lands of Ellerslie
Are thine for ever.

Hal. Rest thee sure, my lord,
I'll do my best to serve you. [*Exit HALIBURTON.*]

Com. Ay, and to serve thyself. Thou art a villain.
But I have need of thee. The death of Wallace
Removes a stumblingblock waylays me ever,
And binds, to boot, King Edward for my debtor.
Pembroke, my brother-in-law, is angling cunningly
In this same pool—But I will be before him. [*Exit.*]

Scene Fifth.

TORWOOD—WALLACE'S OAK.

(*Enter WALLACE, who walks about for some time thoughtfully.*
He starts suddenly, and looks upward.)

'Tis but the eagle :—I have startled him—
He loves his freedom, and he's gone to find it
In yonder mountain world. With what a wing
Of fearless majesty he navigates
The vast concavity!—Aye westward, westward,
To the dark Grampians!—What a scene is there!—
A surgy swell of masses multitudinous,
As if the flood, lashed by the equinox
Storming the heavens, had, even in mid swell

Been turned to stone, and fixed in monument!—
 O that I had thy wing! I too would fly
 From tyrants and be free, beyond those ramparts,
 On whose rough front the finger of th' Eternal
 Hath writ—"Proud spoiler, hither mayst thou come,
 And not beyond." But ha!—

Was it presentiment the wish I breathed?
 Or thy flight augury, co-citizen bird!
 Partak'st with me the populous hostage
 Of this time-hallowed tree?—Art thou my sentinel,
 Warns me at need look to my liberty
 With organ jealous and awake as thine?

I think 'tis even so.—Foeman or friend,
 Footsteps are near.—Then to my sanctuary,
 My forest fortalice not built with hands.—

(Conceals himself within the hollow trunk of the great oak.)

Enter HALIBURTON.

Heavens, what a noble oak! old friend, I warrant me
 Thou hast stood there ere Fergus owned a crown—
 These fifteen hundred years. There's no mistaking it,
 It is my mark. The cottage must be near.

[Exit into the wood.]

SCENE SIXTH.

ELSPETH WYLIE'S COTTAGE.

(Enter from it HALIBURTON and ELSPETH.)

Elsp. The wood is wide, sir:—I'm a poor lone woman:—
 I cannot travel far;—and do not know

Who may be in 't or not.

Hal. Nay, do not fear me.
I know he 's here :—I am the friend of Wallace :—
From good Earl Malcolm I am sent to him,
The bearer of great news. And more in token
That I am in his trust,—I know that Kerle
And Irish Stephen are in hiding with him :—
My name is Haliburton.

Els. What !—Ralph Haliburton,
That fought so nobly with Sir William Oliphant
At Stirling siege ?

Hal. The same.

Els. Thou must be honest,
For thou art brave.

Hal. I pray thee guide me to him—
There 's for thy pains. (*offering money.*)

Els. (*aside*). A bribe ! ho ! ho ! I guess thine errand now.
I cannot guide thee, for I do not know
If he be here :—But I 'll go call my son.
He knows the Torwood—if within its bounds,
Be sure he 'll find him out. Pray enter here,
While I go seek my boy.

[*Exit HALIBURTON into the cottage.*]

Scene Seventh.

THE WOOD NEAR THE COTTAGE.

(*Enter ELSPETH and DAVID WYLIE.*)

Els. A score ! saidst thou ?—a score of followers ?

David W. Of catchpole knaves, armed to the very teeth—

Elsp. O my dear boy, call thy best wits about thee,—
Lead them astray—Give me good time to warn him,
And Wallace time to flee.

David. Content thee, mother—
Leave all to me :—I will so order it,
Wallace may make his choice to fight or flee.

(*HALIBURTON comes forth from the cottage.*)

Elsp. This is my son, sir,
He 's but a simple lad, and no that gleg;
But not a wild cat in the wood knows better
The crooks and caves : and if the man ye want
Be i' the Torwood, Davie will find him out.

[*Exit ELSPETH.*]

Hal. Come, my good lad, thou know'st where Wallace is,
Dost not?

Dav. Ay, may-be, whare, or whareabouts.

Hal. (*Blows a whistle gently. His men come forward.*)

Thou 'lt lead us to the place.

Dav. Na.

Hal. Look thee here. (*holding up a purse.*)

Dav. Is 't gowd or siller?

Hal. It is gold, my boy.

Dav. Then gi'e me it. I'll bring ye near enough,
If so ye binna feared.

Hal. Feared, silly boy!
And twenty of us!

Soldiers. Ha! ha! ha!

Dav. Weel, sirs, laugh an ye like—but in your shoes
I wadna stand!—no, for that muckle purse. (*holding it up.*)
(*Soldiers laugh contemptuously.*)

Hal. Feared, boy, or not, come, lead us to the spot.

(Exeunt, but immediately re-appear, descending into a rocky dell, environed on every side by precipitous crags covered with underwood.)

Hal. This is a frightful place—a fit abode
For outlaw or for robber:—how call ye it?

Dav. The *Howlat's Neuk*:—it's no a chancy place:—
I'm glad you're here—I wadna be my lane in 't
For a' the lands o' Comyn.

Hal. Wherefore, boy?

Dav. Gude safe us a'!—they say that Fadoun's ghost
Walks here o' nights.

Hal. Fadoun—and who was Fadoun?

Dav. An Irishman—
A devil's bairn had pactioned to sell Wallace
To the Southron folk, somewhere ayont Perth,
And Wallace sned his craig—did he no weel, sir,
To sic a rascal?

Hal. Peace! thy tongue runs restive—
You're sure you know the place?

Dav. Oo yes, brawly—
And that you'll see belive—just follow me.

(Enters a crevice of the rock and disappears.)

Hal. Where is he now?—We cannot follow thee—
A fox could hardly enter there:—boy!—Davy!—
Let some one try the passage.

*(Soldiers crowd round the entrance: meanwhile the blast of a
bugle is heard as if on the other side.)*

Ha! what is that?

[Exeunt.]

Scene Eighth.

WALLACE'S OAK.

(WALLACE *issues from the tree. Enter hastily, from different points, KERLE and STEPHEN of Ireland.*)

Ker. There 's something in the wind ! 't was Davie's note.

Steph. There is, past doubt ; and here he comes himself.

(*Enter DAVID WYLIE hastily.*)

Wall. What now, my trusty watch ?

Dav.

Just the old news, sir.

Your hunters are afoot ; they've scented you.—

A score, full armed, for rogue by rogue I counted them.

Wall. So, so ; where left 'st thou them ?

Dav.

I' the *Howlat's Neuk*,

Caged in my rat-trap. Let 's upon the traitors ;

And when we've thinned them by some half-a-score,

With our good arrows, from the rocks above,

Then sword in hand, into the open space,

And brush them beard to beard.

Wall.

My faithful boy,

Thy wit is ever ready, and thy soul

Hath ta'en true knighthood at the touch of heaven.

Thou'st planned it bravely ; be our general,

And we will follow thee.

[*Exeunt, following DAVID WYLIE.*

Scene Ninth.

THE HOWLAT'S NEUK.

(HALIBURTON *and his men seen surrounding the mouth of the cave. A soldier issues from it.*)

Sold. I dare not venture farther; it is endless;
It branches every way; 't is dark as hell;
It may be full of men.

Hal. But yet methought
The blast we heard was in the open air,
And on the farther side.

2 *Sold.* We are entrapped.
That boy was knave, not fool; I thought so ever.
His talk indeed was idiot; but his eye,
Quick as a hawk's, was full of mind and mischief.
We must retrace our steps.

(DAVID WYLIE *appears on the top of the rocks above them.*)

Dav. Beware of Fadoun's ghost! he's in that cave;
There'll be a pair of them ere long—a brace
Of traitor ghosts to dance to the howlat's singing.

Hal. Thou villain! art thou there?

Dav. Another purse
As big as that, and I will show you Wallace.

(WALLACE *now appears on the rocks; and, at other points,*
KERLE *and* STEPHEN.

Wall. What! Haliburton! Is it possible?
Can it be thou? Ralph Haliburton,—he

Who fought so gloriously with William Oliphant
In that immortal siege! And hast thou taken
The devil's arles? Hast thou, too, found it easier
To deal with English arrows tipped with steel
Than capped with gold? Edward, I half forgive thee,
When Scotland breeds such sons, who can condemn
Thy hope to round her with the rings of shame?

Hal. Wallace, surrender thee! Thou seest our numbers.

Dav. (*taking aim, and discharging an arrow*)

There's one the less already.

Wall. Well aimed, my noble boy; there's one to match it.
Stephen, well shot! Kerle, thou hast hit thy mark.
Another round like this, and we may close with them,
They'll be but two to each of us. Ah! they have found
The only outlet; let us down on them! [*Exeunt.*]

Scene Tenth.

AN OPEN SPACE IN THE WOOD NEAR THE PRECEDING SCENE.

(WALLACE, KERLE, STEPHEN, DAVID WYLIE; HALIBURTON
*lying on the ground wounded. The bodies of his followers
scattered around.*)

Hal. In mercy kill me!

Wall. Thou deservest no mercy,
And therefore live. Thou art the hangman's due,
A soldier's sword must not be soiled with thee.
Begone and live, if shame will let thee live.

(*Coming away from him.*)

And now, brave friends, 't is time we changed our roost.
 Then westward, ho! to our old lair i' the Lennox!
 Shift for yourselves: ye know our trysting-place.
 Farewell, my faithful boy.

Dav. Nay, I go with thee.

Wall. Dear boy, I must not let thee, tho' I love thee.
 Thy two brave brothers perished at my side
 On Falkirk moor. I've cost thy mother dear;
 I must not leave her childless.

Dav. My brothers died as Scotsmen ought to die—
 As 't was their prayer they should. They sleep together
 In the Faw-Kirk, close by the gallant Græme:
 And every Scot that makes his pilgrimage
 To the Græme's grave, droppeth a blessing also,
 Balmed in a tear, upon the grassy mound
 That monuments their rest. As to my mother,
 Her blessing follows or forsakes her child,
 As he forsakes or follows William Wallace.

Wall. Well, well, my noble boy. Thy love hath drawn
 Rain from a wasted spring. I pity thee,
 But cannot say thee nay.
 O Scotland! I traduced thee in my haste:
 Thy Haliburtons are but monstrous births,
 These (*embracing DAVID WYLIE and grasping KERLE's hand*)
 are thy genuine sons. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

Scene First.

BOTHWELL CASTLE, THE RESIDENCE OF SIR AYMER DE VALENCE.

(*Enter LADY COMYN and Sir JOHN MENTEITH.*)

Lady C. Nay, fie on thee, Menteith! thou 'dst play the creditor,
And I not yet thy debtor. That thou claimest,
Thou hast not earned.

Ment. Lady, I go to earn it,
And love will lend me wings.

Lady C. Pray Heaven he lend thee
Discretion too, and courage; thou 'lt have need,
Or I misdoubt, of both, ere William Wallace
Sings in thy cage a captive.

Ment. Doubt me not,
Can I lack either, when the stake I play for
Is one might fire a hermit, nerve a coward,
And lend a changeling brains—thy lovely self?

Lady C. (laughing). Ay, ay, Sir Knight, there is another
stake,
A rival mistress, one whose charms outlast
The proof of wear and weather,—on whose features
Time cannot write a wrinkle or a crowfoot;

A mistress dowered with princely plenishing
Of mountain, forest, lake, and lowland strath :—
Indeed, Sir Knight, it is a goodly stake,
And worth the playing for.

Ment. Thou speak'st in riddles ;
What mistress dost thou mean ?

Lady C. The bonny lordships
Of Lennox and Menteith.

Ment. Lady, thou wrong'st me—
'Fore heaven, thou dost. Not all thy brother's gold,
Not the broad earldoms that Edward proffers me,
Nay, not my country's peace—which I prize more—
Whose bane is William Wallace,—not all these
Could gird me to this deed, but for the hope,
The dearer hope beyond. O lady, lady !
For love, the hoard of years, for blighted hopes,
For vows once heard unscorned—for all my youth
Wasted in dreams of heaven, to wake in hell,
Thou owest me usury of reparation.
Oh, thou hast wronged me much !

Lady C. I wronged thee not.
Thou know'st my story all. I was the victim
Of cursed state-craft. Scotland's mightiest peer,
Sir John de Comyn, at whose bugle's call
Full sixty belted knights, with all their followers,
Are bound to don their arms, and do his bidding,
Did sue my hand.—King Edward and my brother
Esteemed him worth the bribing. I was the bribe.
My hand they gave,—my heart they could not give him.

Ment. (kneeling). Then lady, by the love, the maddening
love,
Hopes nursed in happier years—the burning vows—

Lady C. Rise, rise, I pray thee, in the name of Heaven!—
 Thy rashness frightens me ; 't will make me rue
 Our half-completed bond. Achieve thy promise,
 And look for mine,—for such reward as gratitude,
 Mingled, it may be,
 With other thoughts and old remembrances,
 In woman's soul, will not be cold to pay thee—

• (*Holds out her hand to him, which he kisses fervently.*)

Now for the work in hand. Thou 'st seen my brother ?

Ment. Even now I parted from the noble Pembroke
 At Ruglen Kirk ; he's gone to place some troops
 At my disposal.

Lady C. Then, your plan is ripe ?

Ment. Ay ; ere another sun hath glassed himself
 In the still lake, as, from Benlomond's top,
 He bids the world good-night, within the walls
 Of grey Dunbarton, Wallace is my prisoner.
 Wouldst thou vouchsafe me thy fair presence there,
 Thou 'dst see him in his cage ; and, if it pleasure thee,
 With thy fair finger on the lion's neck
 Rivet the chain thyself.

Lady C. Menteith, I own
 'T would pleasure me. But peril not our play
 By over-confidence. The man thou mell'st with
 Hath brains as well as brawn. Thou know'st how oft,
 'Gainst odds and opportunities that make
 His every day a tale, out-miracling
 The deeds of errant knight in minstrel rhyme,
 Or devil-quelling saint in ghostly legend,
 He's left his hunters in the lurch, and laughed at them.

Ment. Ay, but he's laughed his last.

Lady C. So deemed his hunters
At Elcho Park, at Cartlan, and at Torwood,
And yet thou know'st the upshot.

Ment. But this time
He's meshed beyond redemption or retreat,
Had he the devil to back him.

Lady C. Well, Menteith,
I will not fail thee at Dunbarton Castle
To-morrow eve, wer't but to laugh at thee,
Shouldst thou miscarry.

Ment. If I prosper, lady,
What then?

Lady C. Why, then, the laugh's with thee,
And thou, I dare to say, wilt not be slack
To use thy vantage, and to claim the forfeit.

Ment. By heaven! I shall not; to secure the which
I fly on wings of fire. Till then, farewell.

Lady C. Farewell, Menteith. [Exit MENTEITH.]

Farewell, thou devil's own,
That dost out-Judas Judas! Out upon thee,
Thou soulless wretch! Thy friend and schoolfellow,
That fought in battle by thy side, and laid
His head on the same pillow after it,
As by a twin-born brother;—that same head
That's worth a kingdom's price, and bears on it
A kingdom's fate, thou to the butcher's knife
Sell'st for a ruffian's hire! And dost thou dare,
Graced with thy hangman's trophies, to insult
Joan de Valence with thy love or lust?

But I have sworn revenge: I've need of thee.
Wallace has scorned me: and Joan de Valence
Is of a race to love, or to revenge,

By whole, not half. The work I have on hand
Is devil's work, and needs a devil's helping.

[*Exit.*

Scene Second.

LONDON—THE PALACE.

(EDWARD, *with the* EARLS OF HEREFORD *and* GLOSTER, BISHOP BEK, *and other lords. He hands them some papers, at which they look, passing them to each other. EDWARD rises from his seat and walks about angrily.*)

Edward. How think ye, lords, of that?
Is 't not a nest of vipers,—a foul dunghill,
On whose hot surface, spite of all my weeding,
Crop after crop, of rebels and of traitors,
Springs up to full-grown rankness, without end?
What think 'st thou now, Lord Gloster, of thy friend
De Bruce? Is he not every inch a Scot?

Gl. My liege, 'twould seem so, if this document
Be worth the crediting.

Ed. He 'd be, forsooth,
A king, would he! then, by my halidome,
He shall be king, and, at his crowning, have
The hangman for his bishop.

Gl. And that damned double-visaged villain, Comyn,
Shall he not, good my lord, have the like honour,
At the same worthy hand? Of his own showing here,
He's been a rebel, to whitewash the which

He turns informer. First, the sworn confederate,
 Next, the betrayer of the friend did trust
 His honour and his oath. There is no crediting
 Aught from a wretch like this.—

Ed. But all this, Gloster,
 Was for my service.

Gl. Good, your Grace, forgive me,
 'T was for his own, or I misknow the man.

Bek. But Bruce's treason, good my lord of Gloster,
 Doth not rest solely on De Comyn's vouching :—
 There's circumstance to back it. My Lord Pembroke
 Writes here of gatherings in the west : that Wallace,
 Lord Lennox, Moray, and Sir Simon Fraser,
 Have left their hiding-place : that Edward Bruce
 Is mustering Annandale : and that 'tis bruited,
 And of most general credit through the land,
 That Robert Bruce hath set a tryste with them,
 Naming the place, the very day, whereon
 To give them meeting, and to take on him
 The style and state of Scotland's sovereignty.

[*Enter a Servant.*]

Serv. My lord the king,
 Two messengers from Scotland, and in haste,
 From th' Earl of Pembroke and the Lord of Badenach.

(*Gives two sealed packets into the king's hands, and exit.*)

Ed. Ha ! here's a dish of comfort, lords. De Valence
 Doth here inform me the arch-traitor Wallace
 Hath fallen into his trap, and, ere this reaches me,
 Will be fast prisoner in Dunbarton Castle ;
 For certainty whereof, he and Menteith
 Do both impledge their heads. And here, moreover,

From the Lord Badenach I learn, his cousin,
Sir James de Comyn's on his journey hither,
Bringing th' indenture, with the hand and seal
Of Bruce himself, to certify the treason
Whereof he doth impeach him. Good, my Lord
Of Gloster, call me Sir John Segrave hither,
T' attach the traitor's person : then attend me
To the council-hall : this is a business
May not be dallied with. Follow me, lords.

[*Exeunt all but GLOSTER.*]

Gl. Ah, my poor friend ! thy neck is in the noose,
And he that holds it hath a hangman's grip !
There is no mercy, nor no mother's milk,
In that fell bosom ; and the man would snatch
The purposed victim from his lynx's eye,
And tiger clutch,
Must deal in magic or in miracles.

Is there no way to save him ? For, Heaven sain me !
I read no treason in 't, but wish his cause,
With all my soul, God-speed. Were I a Scot,
I'd do what Bruce doth. On my native soil
Of merry England, were a foreign foot
To trample it, or dared a foreign tyrant
Wreathe round the free-born necks of Englishmen,
His despot's iron collar, as in Scotland
It hath been done by Edward, then, by Heaven !
Keep he aback who should, Ralph de Monthermer
Would risk his neck, ay, every hour o' the day,
And every day o' the year, to work their riddance,
And do his country right. Is there no way ?

(*Pondering.*)

Ha ! Bruce is quick of wit, ready and capable,

I've heard him construe riddles for the nonce,
Would give old Œdipus himself the megrims.

(*Looking at his spurred heel.*)

By Heaven, the very thing! I have it here:
I must not lose a moment.

[*Exit hastily.*]

SCENE Third.

BRUCE'S LODGINGS.

(*Enter BRUCE, LINDSAY, and a SERVANT; BRUCE holding in his hand a pair of gilt spurs and a purse of gold.*)

Br. And from my noble friend,
Ralph de Monthermer,* Earl of Gloster, saidst thou?

Serv. Even so, my lord.

Br. What did he charge thee farther?

Serv. He bade me speed to thee, and with such haste
As life or death were in't: be sure to find thee,—
Commend him to thee, and, with hearty thanks,
Return the loan that he had borrow'd of thee,
Whereof thy need, as thou didst notice him,
Is of most pressing and immediate urgency.

Br. And said he nought besides?

Serv. No, my good lord, save earnest repetition

* Ralph De Monthermer married Joan of Acres, widow of Gilbert de Clare Earl of Gloster, and was permitted to use the title of Gloster during the minority of his stepson, who was the king's ward.

To prove my speed, and bring him back assurance
That I had spoke thyself.

Br. Where is Lord Gloster?

Serv. At council with the king,—wherefrom, in haste
He did come forth, much—as it seemed to me—
Disturbed in mood,—and having lessoned me,
Returned forthwith.

Br. Bear to the noble Gloster
My humble service, and my hearty thanks.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

Ha! Lindsay, there's a mystery in this,
More than the seeming bears.—
What can Monthermer mean?

Lind. And doth he mean, then,
More than his message bore? Did you not send
To crave repayment of the loan?

Br. No, Lindsay :
I never lent Monthermer spurs or gold,
Nor is he given to jesting. With the king
At council, and disturbed! So said his messenger.
Now, all the saints forfend, they should have seized
The herald Grimsby on his way to Scotland,
And found my letters on him!

Lind. Letters, my lord!
For whom?

Br. For Wallace and my brother Edward.
There's hanging matter in these letters, Lindsay,
Should Edward light on them. I hope he has not;
But there is danger, whatsoe'er the cause.
Monthermer is my friend; his double gift
Doth token danger, and necessity
For instant flight, and far. We must to horse,—

Off to the north! Our neck's in jeopardy,
 Till we have placed the Cheviot and the Tweed
 Betwixt us and the hangman. Haste thee, saddle us
 Our two best steeds, the fleetest and the strongest!
 Our life's upon the wheel, and doth depend
 Even on a single turn. At the back postern
 Abide me: I'll be with thee instantly. [*Exit* LINDSAY.
 Ho! who waits there?

(*Enter* SERVANT.)

I'm to my cabinet
 With Sir James Lindsay, and on urgent business,
 Let none disturb us—on thy peril see to 't—
 Of what degree soever till I call thee. [*Exit.*
Serv. I'll see to it, my lord.

[*Exit.*

Scene Fourth.

SCENE CHANGES TO SCOTLAND—THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
 OF GLASGOW.

(*Enter* WALLACE and MENTEITH.)

Ment. Ha! ha! ha! ha! Nay, Wallace, pardon me,
 I cannot choose but laugh! It is i' faith,
 A right good homily. Old Sinclair's self,
 The Bishop of Dunkeld, might grudge thy gift;
 I've heard a worse from him. Thou'rt grown fantastical:
 Thy brain's abreed with maggots. Thou'lt turn visioner,
 Or don the monk's hood, if this humour lasts.

Wall. No, no, Menteith; I'm not i' the beadsman's vein,
Nor is't the mood o' the moment.

Thou wouldst not have me what the Southron dames
Do picture me, to hush their squalling brats,
And fright them from the crying,—a fierce Ogre,
Who every morning laves his hands with blood,
And then goes forth to slay men for his pastime!

I am in truth aweary of the life
That evil times, and an enforced necessity,
Have yoked me to. I've been too long, Menteith,
A man of blood, and I have need of leisure
For self-communion, and a shriving-time
To even accounts with Heaven.

Ment. O worse and worse!
Did I not guess aright? shall I bespeak thee
A cowl and cell in bonny Inchmahome?

Wall. In Inchmahome! Ah! dost thou mind, Menteith,
The happy hours we spent not far from it,
Where thine own castle, on its island nest,
Doth crown the centre of the lone Loch Rusky?
Were not those happy times? We had not then on us
The taint of blood,—save of the glutton ged,
The tyrant of the lake; or the fleet roebuck,
That many a weary mile, o'er moss and moor,
Led us by Lubnaig lake, or up the steep
Of dark Benledi. O for that life again!

Ment. What! not a word of thine old paradise,
Whereof thou gav'st me keeping? There too, Wallace,
We have been merry, have we not?

Wall. Ay, old Dunbarton! I do love thee well.
Oft on thy peak, smitten by sun and storm,
Bushless and bleached, scarred with the dint of centuries,

Down the unscaleable and fissured steep,
 I've gazed agiddy, watching the Atlantic,
 That from far western worlds, yet unexplored
 And nameless, did his murmured worshipping—
 For so did fancy deem—as he did bathe
 The blessed rock that gave Iërne's saint,
 The holy Patrick, birth. From the 'yond shore
 Meanwhile of Clyde, fringed with its balmy birchwoods,
 Touched by the breath of May, the gentle south
 Came kissingly across, dispensing health,
 Dispensing fragrance! These were hours, indeed!
 Sweetly they sped, and left no heartsore after them.
 When shall we lead that happy life again?

Ment. Sooner, mayhap, than thou dost reckon of.
 But tell me, Wallace, how dost like my nephew?
 I hope thou find'st him apt and serviceable?

Wall. Oh! 't is a youth of promise; shrewd of wit:
 I thank thee for him. In my present shifts
 He is a treasure to me.

Ment. I'm glad thou find'st him so. Whate'er his wit,
 I certify his will. When thou hast need
 For secrecy and trustworth messenger,
 He'll pass betwixt us: thou may'st unbosom to him
 As to myself. I pray thee, send him to me
 With thy first news of Bruce.

Wall. Be sure I fail not.

Ment. Where dost thou roost to-night?

Wall. That is a secret

I tell to very few: but thou art of them:
 And therefore know my hostel for this night
 Is even hard by; my castle is a barn.

Ment. O then, I guess the place;—Robroyston barn,
Is 't not?

Wall. Even so.

Ment. And how art thou attended?

Wall. Save honest Kerle, and thine own trusty nephew,
I have none other company.

Ment. Ha! where 's
Stephen of Ireland, and that pearl of pages,
Thy little Davy?

Wall. Stephen 's to the south,
For tidings of De Bruce: and, as for Davy,
He 's my intelligencer. He has eyes,
Ears, and a wit to use them. He 's abroad
To gather news.

Ment. Well, for a life so precious,
Thou art but poorly guarded: and so near, too,
The tiger's deadliest lair; so near the strongholds
Of stern De Clifford, and of subtle Valence!

Wall. 'T is that makes safety in the smallest number.
Thou know'st I 've set a tryste with Bruce, to meet him
Upon midsummer night, on the Borough-moor:
I must not be far off.

Ment. And Heaven itself,
For Scotland's sake, will guard thee, and rain down
Shame and confusion on thine enemies.
But fare-thee-well! I must with haste to Glasgow,
Ere the night fall. Be sure to give me warning
When Bruce arrives.

Wall. Oh, trust to me, Menteith.
I 've many friends, and thou art of the chiefest.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene Fifth.

NEAR THE SAME.

(Enter MENTEITH and JOHN SHORT M'AULAY.)

Ment. Thou understandest me. Give not the signal
Till they be sure asleep.

M'Aulay. I am their butler,
They'll sleep the sooner, and they'll sleep the sounder.

Ment. And mind their weapons well.

M'A. I'm school'd enough;
And should I blunder it, I put this head,
And all that's in 't, in pawn.

Ment. Bestir thee, boy.
When I am Earl of Lennox and Menteith,
Thou wilt not lack thy wage.

M'A. Uncle, I've that
Which pricks me on without; my brother's blood
Is on his sword; my wage is my revenge.

[Exeunt severally.]

Scene Sixth.

A WOOD NEAR THE SCOTTISH BORDER.

*(Enter BRUCE and LINDSAY covered with dust, and as if just
dismounted, after a long journey.)*

Br. Ugh! by St. Kentigern! but all my bones
Are on the ache. We've done a feat to-day

To brag on, Lindsay, o'er the blazing billet,
When beards do wag at Yule. We've rode the brooze—

Lind. And won it too, I hope.

Br. I hope so too ;

Though it has made us chase the flying crow
O'er ditch and dyke, o'er mountain and o'er hollow,
Like mad moss-troopers in a border foray.

Our gallant steeds have need of breathing space,
And bravely they have earned it. Here's a spot
That woos us temptingly. There's for our horses
Herbage and running stream ; and for their masters,
Shade and a sward of velvet. Let us rest us.

(They sit down.)

Lindsay, for this long hour I have been musing
On what thou 'st said of Comyn. By St. Paladie !
I think thou judgest hardly of him ; though
I own thou 'st shook my faith somewhat.

Lind. My lord,

I have spoke freely, of my love to you,
What long time I have thought. The grounds I stated
Are strong in circumstance ; they are no more ;
Thou must not reckon of them but as hereafter
Thine own observance, and De Comyn's acts,
May give the comment.

Br. I will watch him, Lindsay,
And that right narrowly. They have in Badenach,
Comyn's own country, in the native tongue,
A rhyming rede familiar as a proverb,
Phrases no flattery of the Comyn race.

Lind. How runs it ?

Br. In my rendering it runs thus :—

*While there doth grow green tree in wood,
There will be guile in Comyn's blood.*

Lind. God grant, my lord, it be not prophecy,
And of your finding true.

Br. Ha! Lindsay, look;
What men be these? They seek to shun us, seeming
As if they knew, and yet would fain avoid us.
By all the saints! the cousin and the doer
Of the Lord Badenach's self! Sir James de Comyn;
And posting south the Tweed! Some mystery's here,
It boots us to unravel. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE SEVENTH.

A GLADE IN THE SAME WOOD.

(*Enter* SIR JAMES COMYN, *and* BRUCE *following him.*)

Sir J. C. Nay, good my lord, there's nothing in the packet
That aught importeth thee.

Br. How knowest thou that?
Lord Badenach's my friend, conjunct and sworn;
He hath no secrets from me. In that packet
There may be matter that shall cause me turn
My steps a-south, and save me farther travel.
I prithee give it me.

Sir J. C. I have it not.

Br. I saw thee have it, scant a minute past.

Sir J. C. My fellow hath it; he hath gone before
To the hostelry. We are on speed, and lack
Fresh horses for our journey.

(Enter FERGUS, *his sword drawn, followed by LINDSAY, with his sword also drawn.*)

Fergus! ha!

What means this broil?

Ferg. This gentleman, perforce,
Would rob me of the packet I've in charge,
And I did make resistance.

Sir J. C. Thou didst well.

Br. Sirrah, surrender it!

Sir J. C. Lord Carrick, pardon me;
'T is trusted to my charge; I may not yield it,
Nor shall, but with my life.

Br. Then shalt thou yield it,
Even with thy life. The time's too pressing, sir,
To be bestowed on parley. Thou didst know me—
Didst know me as his friend, secret and sworn,
On whose affairs thou hast confessed to me
Thou now art journeying; yet wouldst thou shun me;
And being barred thyself, wouldst speed thy varlet
Upon his stealthy flight;—I have some cause
To doubt De Comyn's faith. Thy conduct now
Arms doubt with circumstance. I'll be resolved.
The packet or thy life!

Sir J. C. Neither, De Bruce. (*Drawing his sword.*)
Fergus, stand fast! We cannot bring our chief
Offering more welcome than his en'my's head.

Br. His en'my's head! Then, Lindsay, he's the villain
Thou held'st him for. Now, traitors, for your life!

[*Exeunt fighting*]

Scene Eighth.

ANOTHER GLADE IN THE SAME WOOD.

(*Enter BRUCE and LINDSAY, their swords bloody; BRUCE reading an open packet.*)

Br. Look, Lindsay, look! the very deed we sealed
And swore to secret keeping at Camb'skenneth!
And there the traitor's letter to King Edward,
Wherein he speaks of former messages,
And new repeats his earnest counselling
To have me taken off. This man-sworn wretch!
Lindsay, thou 'st read him right. To horse! to horse!
Mettle and muscle they must furnish yet
Till they have borne us to the fox's den.
He 's at Dumfries: so shows this tell-tale missive;
There shall we find and dole him his deserts.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

Scene First.

ROBROYSTON BARN IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF GLASGOW—

TIME, NIGHT.

(WALLACE, walking about in the interior of the barn, agitated.)

Wall. Away! away! it is but mockery.—
The sense did play me false. I've heard of such things—
Of shapes seen dancing in the airy void,
And grinning spectres, when the blood's a-fever.
'T was but a fire-flaught, that the fretted nerve
Struck from a feverish brain, and fancy's fooling
Did shape to semblance of a thing that was.

Ha! there again! This is no mockery,
No cozening of the sense. It glares on me,
Even as I saw 't at Gask, distinct and horrible.
O thou mysterious, intangible terror,
That tak'st the only shape I may not look
With unblenched cheek upon! hadst thou but aught
Doth kin with flesh and blood, I'd question thee,
And force confession with this argument.—
(Waving his sword.)

But as thou art, by Him that thou and I
Must answer to, I do adjure thee, Fadoun,

Or whatsoe'er thou be, that dost inherit
 The form was his,—why thus, a second time,
 Dost thou, an ominous, unearthly guest,
 Steal on my noon of night? Speak, I adjure thee.

Thou smilest, but speakest not; and in thy smile
 There is a sneer, a cold, malignant joy
 Shoots, like an ice-bolt, through me. Ha! evanished!
 Where but the levin's flash could perviate,
 Nor left thy mark of passage! No! by heaven!
 This is no fantasy; nor can it be
 Foresign of good; twice hath it come to me.—
 Oh! that man's blood sits heavy on my soul;
 I fear I did it rashly.¹

(Enter KERLE.)

Kerle. Methought I heard thee speak. Thy cheek is
 colourless—

Thou lookest a-wild—thine eye has terror in 't,
 As one new wakened from a horrid dream,
 And yet not all himself.

Wall. It was no dream.

Kerle. What was no dream?

Wall. Kerle, I did see him there—

On my soul's hope I did.

Kerle. Whom didst thou see?

¹ Another ghostly visitation of this kind is recorded in Scottish history—that of the Bastard of Arran (Sir James Hamilton), who had been put to death by his orders, to King James the Fifth, at his palace of Linlithgow, April 1546, and which had been interpreted, truly if we may judge by the event, as ominous of his approaching end.—*Vide* Miss Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 392.

Wall. Fadoun.

Kerle. Impossible. Thou wert asleep,
And thou didst dream of him.

Wall.

I was awake—

I am not more so now. I had just stretched me
On yonder bench of oak,—my mind a-busy
With its own communings, when suddenly
He stood before me, on that very spot
Where thou stand'st now.

Kerle. Thou wert a-doze, half sleeping and half waking,
Dreaming of Fadoun, and the shape thou sawest
Was but the flashing of thy heated eye,
Opening a-sudden on the dark, that startled thee,
Betwixt asleep and wake.

Wall.

I saw him, Kerle,

With every faculty of soul and sense,
In as true action as thine own are now,
Most horribly distinct. His ghastly head,
Streaming with blood, showed his ill-favoured features
In their death-throe, as vivid to the sense
As when I severed it in Methven wood,
In my too hasty rage.

Kerle.

He was a traitor,

And dree'd but his deserts. Thy life, the lives
Of all, were with thee then, were i' the balance
In mortal poise 'gainst his,—and made his death
An act of guiltless and enforced necessity.

Wall. He was the only man that e'er I slew,
Except in battle and upon defence.

Kerle. My lord, thy late fatigues, thy much unrest,
And thoughts too needless nice touching that traitor,

Have worked together to unseat thy health,
And thou dost need repose.

(JOHN SHORT M'AULAY *enters.*)

Come hither, boy,

Hast in thy flagon aught may medicine
My lord to a sound sleep?

M'A. Ay : a medicine

Will not enforce a wry face in the swallowing.

(*Goes out, and returns with a large silver cup, which he
hands to WALLACE.*)

Wall. What ! Bordeaux?

M'A. Ay, sir, of mine uncle's sending,

From his own cellar at Dunbarton Castle :

He did commend it much.

Wall. It must be good, then :

Sir John Menteith is wise in vintages,

And nice withal : and though his heart be Scots,

He hath a Southron's palate. Here, my boy,

Here's to thine uncle and thyself, a health

From one is largely debtor to you both,

And hath none other coin to pay withal,

But thanks and hearty love. Here, pledge me, Kerle.

Kerle. Nay, pardon me ; 't will make me fall on sleep.

M'A. Oh, mind not that, good Kerle : I watch to-night,
And will not touch the cup.

Kerle. Nay, 't is my watch, boy.

M'A. Nay, nay, good Kerle : since Stephen went away,
Thou'st more than watched thy turn. I fear thou ratest
My wit or carefulness at small account.

Kerle. Neither, my boy. Thy wit doth pass thy years,
Thy faith thy wit. But we're amid the breakers :

The rocks are rife and treacherous around us :
 Danger doth thrive in darkness, and doth need
 Keen-eyed experience for his opposite.

When thou hast served apprenticing like mine,
 Thou 'lt prove the better sentinel, I doubt not.

Wall. Nay, Kerle, he 's in the right on 't. Thou of late
 Hast overtasked thy strength. Give him his wish—
 I'll be his voucher. And, besides, to-night
 I'd have thee by me, for my soul is heavy,
 I am not well in mind.

Kerle.

Well, be it so.

(Takes the cup and drinks.)

Young cock, be sure that thou do crow betimes,
 Should there come footsteps near.

M'A.

Oh, fear me not ;

I will enforce confession from thyself,
 That a young eye can see as far i' the dark,
 And a young ear can hear as far-off footfall
 As e'er an old one.

Kerle.

God grant it be so !

But keep a good look-out.

(WALLACE and KERLE compose themselves to sleep ; WALLACE on an oaken bench or settle ; KERLE on the ground, somewhat nearer the door. M'AULAY goes out, but in a short time returns, at first cautiously opening the door and listening, then approaching gently on tiptoe, first to KERLE, then to WALLACE.)

M'A. My seasoned cup hath done his duty bravely ;
 They're on the snore already. Time is now
 My signal were alight.

(Exit, but immediately returns and cautiously removes his bugle from around WALLACE'S neck, then his sword, dagger, bow and arrows; in like manner removes KERLE'S arms: goes to a narrow slit or aperture in the wall of the barn, and hands them to some one without. He then uncloses the door of the building and goes out, but immediately returns conducting a band of English soldiers, who station themselves near the doorway. Their leader—to M' AULAY, whom he accompanies to the bottom of the stage)—

Our orders are express. Lord Pembroke charged us
To take them both alive.

M'A. Then I do prophesy,
When they are ta'en alive, there will be few of you
Alive to boast the deed.

Off. What! and but two of them,
Unharnessed and asleep! that were a feat
To brag on, truly!

M^rA. Nay, the two, I promise you,
Will ne'er be ta'en alive. Your game is Wallace :
And to make sure of him, quiet his chamberlain—
He 's not of mark sufficient to be made
A raree-show to stare at : yet you'll find
He 's not a pleasant play-fellow to tilt with,
Should he awake : and to forbend the which
I'll give his sleep the rivet.

(Stabs KERLE; at the same time making a signal to the soldiers, who rush two of them on KERLE, the rest on WALLACE.)

And now, Wallace,

The Philistines be on thee !

Kerle (starting up). Wallace ! Wallace !
Villains, unclutch me ; ha ! no sword ; I'm slain.

M'A. (*to the soldiers*). Away with him!

Kerle (*faintly, as he is hurried off.*) Wallace! awake, awake!

Wall. (*who has started up at the first cry of KERLE.*)

Whose cry was that? Was it thy voice, M'Aulay?

Ha! are ye here? (*shaking off his assailants*) unwarned,
unweaponed, too!

Where art thou, Kerle? Thy sword,—thy sword,—I pray
thee;

Thy dagger, anything;—not even my bugle left me!

Then there is treachery in 't. But it is not

The harness makes the soldier—

(*Tearing off a large portion of the bench on which he had
been lying.*)

With a worse

I've done a darg ere now.

(*Rushes on the soldiers, who gradually retreat, till at length they
are driven out of the apartment, fastening, however, the door
after them, and leaving WALLACE alone within.*)

But where is Kerle?

Methought I heard his voice. Was it a dream?

Or is he slain indeed? Ha! some one calls me.

Ment. (*Outside the slit or aperture in the wall of the barn.*)

Wallace, Wallace!

Wall. (*going up to the place*) Is 't thou, my faithful friend?
then God be praised,

Thou art not slain.

Ment. It is thy faithful friend.

Wall. Ha! 't is not Kerle: but, or mine ear deceived me.
It is Menteith.

Ment. Wallace, it is thy friend.

Wall. Hand me, I pray, thy sword. I am beset,

Nor have not inch of steel ; lend me thy whinyard,
I'll be anon by thee.

Ment. Alas, my friend !

It is impossible.

Wall. Art thou, too, weaponless ?

Ment. No ; but—

Wall. Then 't is no time for buts ; I pray thee,
What weapon thou hast on.

Ment. And be thy murderer !

Nay, Wallace, pardon me ; I did come hither

To save thy life, not to abet thy murder.

There 's no escape for thee : thou art enclosed

By hopeless numbers, and the brand 's alight

Already on the thatch, that with a breath,

A nod, a single glance, in one broad blaze

Shall wrap thyself and thy frail fortalice.

I pray thee thy consent, that I may make
Conditions for thy life.

Wall. What ! with the Southron !
Never, Menteith. They will not mind conditions,
Nor will I tender them.

Ment. Nay then, kind Kerle,
And my poor nephew, Heaven have mercy on you !

Wall. Ha ! do they live, then ?

Ment. Only while I bring
De Clifford thy resolve. Let me, I pray thee,

For a brief space, have private parley with thee. [*Exit.*

Wall. (alone). As for my life, were that the only question,
'T were easy of resolving ; but my friends,
My faithful friends ! Kerle once did save my life,
And shall I, for a proud punctilio,
Throw his away ? Or shall I rob my friend

Of the brave youth his love did loan me with ?

It were most base requiting ! (Enter MENTEITH.)

Well, Menteith,

What is the price that I must pay for them ?

Ment. To bide in Edward's peace, nor keep alive,
Singly, the flame that wastes our wretched country.

Wall. To bide in Edward's peace ! humph ! well, Menteith ?

Ment. And dwell a prisoner at large, within
Dumbarton Castle.

Wall. What ! a prisoner,
Saidst thou ?

Ment. But under keeping of a friend ;—
Under my wardship. Thy consent, I pray thee.
What ! not a word ? Thou dost not sure mislike
Thy keeper, or mistrust him.

Wall. No, Menteith ;
But neither like nor trust his co-conditioners.
They do not mean thee fair.

Ment. Sir Robert Clifford
Is of long time my friend ;—he is their leader :—
From him these terms I tender thee, and under
The plighted safeguard of his knightly honour.

Suspecting their design, I hurried after them,
With what scant force the o'erta'en suddenness
Did furnish me withal. I have a band
Of stout M'Aulays from the Levenside,
Faithful tho' few ; and should he play me false—
Should he but swerve one tittle from our bond,
While there remaineth of my band a man,
And of my blood a drop, I will not 'bate
A hair's-breadth of thy rights.

Wall. But with the tryste
Thou wot'st of, on the Borough-moor, so near too.

Ment. Wallace, that cause thou knowest is dear to me
As 't is to thee; and thou dost know, moreover,
By sacred pact, I'm pledged to render up
Dunbarton Castle to its rightful king,
Soon as De Bruce unfurls his royal banner
Upon his native soil.—Bide we our time
That nut's not yet a-brown.

Wall. Well then, Menteith, to thee, and to thine honour,
I render me, but to no Southron living.—
Thou 'rt sure our friends are safe?

Ment. And with my life
I will be bound for theirs. Now let me call
Some of my followers to bind thine arms.

Wall. To bind mine arms, Menteith! Nay, never, never,
I'll never yield to that!

Ment. Nay, 't is but seeming,
And for thy safety. They'll mistrust us else.
The Southrons fear thee so, that from mere terror,
If thou 'rt at large, they'll do thee violence.

Wall. Well, be it so; thou'lt see our terms enforced.

Ment. On my faith's pledge—with my life's warranty.—
Leave me to deal with them.

(MENTEITH here introduces a band of M'AULAYS, his own
followers. English soldiers in the distance behind them.
WALLACE offers his arms, which the M'AULAYS bind securely
with strong cords.)

Ment. Noble De Clifford, Wallace is thy prisoner.
I know thou'lt use him as one brave man will
Another brave man in adversity.
I go before you to Dunbarton Castle,
To give thee and thy prisoner due reception.

[Exit.

[WALLACE is led out guarded.]

SCENE SECOND.

NEAR THE FORMER.

(Enter DAVID WYLIE.)

Dav. I do not like this news. Why should De Clifford,
 All o' the sudden, and with such a following,
 Steal from the castle under cloud of night,
 Shaping his course to north? So much is certain :
 Something's afoot. I pray they be a watch,
 And Kerle the sentinel : for Heaven assoil me,
 I do not like that youth. Methinks his eye
 Doth speak another language than his tongue,
 And that his acts do over-act affection.
 He hath too much o' the form and phrase of duty
 To have the real'ty. But who comes here?
 Ha! can it be? the very youth I spoke of.
 What, ho! M'Aulay, whither art thou bound?

(Enter M'AULAY.)

M'A. To the old rock, boy.

Dav. To Dunbarton Castle?
 On private mission to thine uncle, ha!—
 I prithee, where is Wallace?

M'A. On his voyage
 To the same port.

Dav. That's sudden.

M'A. Sudden! ay,
 And unexpected too, I warrant him.

Dav. Know'st thou what moved him to this sudden shift?

M'A. What moves to many shifts—necessity.

Dav. Ha! have his hunters scented him again,
And made him change his lair? Is he attended?

M'A. Ay, like a king; most royally attended.
He's guarded like a king; he'll not complain
Of scant attendance, trust me.

Dav. Nay, M'Aulay,
I'm not a riddle-reader, as thou know'st;
Let my plain question purchase a plain answer—
I'm not i' the trim for jests.

M'A. Neither is Wallace,
Or I misdeem. Faith, 't is no jest for him.

Dav. What is no jest for him?

M'A. To be hand-gyved
I' the highroad to the gallows.

Dav. Ha! what saidst thou?—
Nay, nay, it cannot be: for, were it so,
Thou ne'er couldst make it matter for thy mirth.
Where's Kerle?

M'A. Asleep.

Dav. Asleep!

M'A. Ay, in the sleep
Whence but one blast can wake him,—he is dead.

Dav. Dead!

M'A. As his grandsire. The Robroyston rooks
Will croak their grace o'er him ere morrow's eve.

Dav. Nay, nay, M'Aulay, thou dost time this ill,
I'm on the spur of haste: I must see Wallace.
My news import him much; it is no jesting time;
I prithee, where is he?

M'A. I've told thee, fool;
And told without a jest. He's to Dunbarton,

De Clifford's prisoner ; and I 'm posting after
I' the hope to see him hanged.

Dav. De Clifford's prisoner !
Ha ! that doth tell like truth. But, heaven and earth !
Why dost thou speak it thus ? Was Kerle not there ?
Did he not stand by him ?

M'A. He was asleep ;
He 's in a sounder now.

Dav. And thou, M'Aulay ?

M'A. I was a looker-on !

Dav. A looker-on !
No more ?

M'A. O yes, more than a looker-on ;
'T was I did slip the Philistines upon him ;
'T was I did drug their sleep ; 't was I provided
My brave M'Aulays with the hempen withe,
Did lash his felon arms even to the cracking.

Dav. And, O most reprobate and tenfold devil !
Why didst thou do all this ?

M'A. Why did I do it ?
Oh, I have plotted it by night, by day ;
I 've brooded over it—glutted my fancy with 't ;
Yea, I have lived upon the thought of it ;
For weeks it hath been meat and drink to me ;
My nightly watch I 've made to speed with it ;
My daily service I have sweetened with it ;
Rest, rest thee now, poor ghost ! thou art avenged.

Dav. Avenged ; whom talkest thou of ?

M'A. My brother Aulay.
He slew my only brother in the Torwood,
By Haliburton's side.

Dav. By Haliburton's !

Ha! was thy brother there?

Thou hell-born adder of a damned nest,
That crept'dst into the bosom thou wouldst sting,
Know I did help to crush thy reptile brother.

M'A. Thou help to crush him! Aulay was a man.
Ha! ha! what! thou'rt a chafe young cock'rel, art thou,
And fain wouldst show a crest,—thou help to crush him!
Thou mouse rampant—thou four-foot-nothing Hercules,
Had I but time and twig to waste on thee,
I'd cool thy choler with a birchen pill.
But I must on—I would not miss the sport;
Wilt come and see thy master hang, boy?

Dav.

Wretch!

Thy serpent's eye shall ne'er look on that sight.
Nay, stir not—strive not—hence thou ne'er shalt go;
Thy foot is on thy grave; O Wallace! Wallace!
Thy wrongs sit heavy on my sword, and on
This perjured villain's soul.

(They fight, M'AULAY is slain.)

Lie there and rot,

The curse of Scotland for thine epitaph;
O had I done this deed but yesterday!

[Exit hastily.]

Scene Third.

DUNBARTON CASTLE.

*(Enter LADY COMYN and JAILOR.)**Jail.* There is the donjon, lady ; this unlocks it.*(Presenting a key.)**Lady C.*

I thank thee, friend.

[Exit JAILOR.]

But what hath brought me hither ? Till this moment

I have not dared to ask myself that question.

To look on him did scorn me,—in his cage,

And feast on my revenge ? Fie, that were devilish !

Ah ! how this tell-tale blood, this fitful tide

That ebbs and flows in wild alternative

Of fierce and faint, reveals another hope

Ere it hath bodied it to shape of thought,—

Perchance he may relent ;—

What then ? it comes too late ; I'll in, however,

Though it were only but to look on him

For the last time, and say farewell to him !

(Unlocks the door of the dungeon softly ; WALLACE discovered, chained and asleep.)

Ha ! fast asleep. Such power hath innocence !

I have not slept to-night. How legibly

Hath Heaven's own finger, on that noble brow,

Writ MAN ! I dare not look on him,

For every look doth kill a purpose in me—
Melt to remorse,—awake the woman in me,
And shoot a dizzying faintness to my soul.

O were that heart atune to mine,—let prudes,
Let priests, say what they might, I'd follow thee,
Even to the world's end. But hush! he wakes.

Wall. (rising.) Methought I heard a voice; but it was
nothing.

I've seen o' late what makes me fancy's fool
In things of sight and sound.

Lady C. (coming forward.) Nay, 'twas no fancying,
It was my voice,—the voice of one doth pity thee,
And shames to find thee here. Ungrateful Scotland!
Is this the place, the guerdon thou decreest
To thy deliverer?

Wall. Lady, 't is such a place
As William Wallace many a year has looked
To be the tenant of.

Lady C. That heartless villain!
What moved him to this deed?

Wall. He is a man.

Lady C. A man! say'st thou! he's none; he is a devil!
Wallace, wouldst thou be free? Menteith has sold thee,—
Ay, to the shambles; wouldst thou not be free?—
Thou answerest not.

Wall. I'm not in love with death,
Nor much afraid of him: we have been playfellows
Too long for that.

Lady C. Thou wouldst accept deliverance
On terms, wouldst not?

Wall. Ay, lady, on such terms
As honesty and honour might abide with.

Lady C. Instance me, now.

Wall. Strike from mine arms these tangles,

Restore me my good sword : give me arm's room

I' the open field, and let me feel the breeze

That sweeps in freedom from the Lennox hills,

My face a-north : and then, let Robert Clifford

Plant him atween, backed by his forty followers,

And bar my passage thorough, if they may.

This venture will I for my freedom, lady.

Lady C. Nay, nay, that will not do; they will not listen to 't;

Is there nought else ? Were love thy ransom,

Wouldst thou repay 't with love ?

(*WALLACE is silent.*)

Thou dost not answer me.

If once thou quit these walls, there's not on earth

Can stand betwixt thee and a dreadful doom.

I have some means—it boots not tell thee how—

While thou art here to work thy franchising :—

Say thou wilt take me for thy 'scape-fellow,

And pay me love for love, I'll follow thee

Even to the round earth's bourne,—

Partner thy fortunes, be they winter-blasted,

Or summer-blossoming ; for the trim terrace,

I'll take my pleasure in the forest maze ;

Exchange my down-bed for a couch of fern ;

My carved chamber for a moss-brown cave ;

Make me a palace of the outlaw's den,

And turn the wild-wood to a paradise !

Thou wilt not say me nay—

Wall.

Lady, 't were easy,

Could I but stoop my manhood to the task,

To cozen credence with a glozing tale,

Framed to the need,—like to the shallow vow
 Made by the hypocrite i' the hurricane,
 That doffs observance when the danger's by.
 But I'm a soldier, and unschooled i' the art
 Doth own the devil for its first professor ;
 I cannot promise where I do not purpose
 Performance honestly. I pray thee, leave me ;
 Thy presence here but mocks my sunken fortune,
 And wrongs thy better self.

Lady C. Art thou prepared, then,
 To be the gaze of every paltry village,
 As thou art driven to thy slaughter-house ;
 Set up i' th' market-place, a flouting stock
 For rascal mobs to stale their vileness on ?
 Hast thou prepared thee for thy doom—a death
 Not such as soldiers smile to look upon
 I' th' honoured field, with glory's garnish on 't,
 But such as felons die—doled out to thee
 With such nice measuring, that every drop
 Of pain and shame shall give its flavour to thee.—
 Art thou prepared for this ?

Wall. Lady, I am,
 With Heaven's good grace in aid. There have been those
 Who, rather than in one enforced phrase,
 Give breath to blasphemy, or duck the head,
 In sign of reverence, to a senseless thing
 Of stock or stone, did quaff the molten metal,
 Enter the furnace fierce with tenfold fires,
 Face the starved lion in his den,—or give
 Their naked bodies to the shameful gibbet !

There have been such,—women among them too,
 Yea, tender virgins in the bud of life,

Soft from the mother stalk ; and yet they shrunk not
From fear of death, nor from the keener pang
Of maiden shame ; and shall a man, a soldier,
Where these have played the man, enact the woman ?

Lady C. Am I so scorned then ? Look on me, proud man,
Am I so hideous foul in flesh and form,
So vile to sense, that thou dost count my love
Worse than the worst of deaths ?

Wall. No, lady, no ;
Thy beauty well might tempt a nicer eye,
And shake a firmer breast :
But mine is lorded by one only passion,
That will not brook a partner. I have vowed
My hand, my heart, my life, to widowed Scotland,
Her liegeman and her lover. And, bethink thee,
How could I trumpet forth my country's wrongs,
How could I rail against my country's robbers,
How could I battle for my country's rights,
Standing upon my holiness of cause,
While I myself did wrong, did rob my neighbour
Of his most holy and most hearted rights,
A bawling patriot and a base adulterer !

Lady C. Farewell, proud fool, then—thou art frenetic—
I leave thee to thy fate : nay, go to lend it
Whate'er the working of a woman's brain,
Sharpened by scorn, made furious by revenge,
Can be the mother or the midwife to.

[*Exit, locking the dungeon.*]

Scene Fourth.

APARTMENT IN THE CASTLE.

(Enter SIR JOHN MENTEITH.)

Ment. Part of my recompence I have already
 Fast in my coffers : but the better part
 Is still expectancy. Ha ! here 's one item of 't,
 A bribe to bait the devil's hook withal,
 When he doth angle for a nicer prey ;
 A morsel might provoke the shrivelled anchorite
 To break his flesh-fast on a dish of sin !—
 Comyn forestalled me once : but now I have
 Double amend in one—of him and her—

(Enter LADY COMYN.)

Aha ! fair lady, who 's the laughter now ?
 Have I miscarried ? You have looked on him ;
 Have I not coop'd the eagle in his cage,
 And marred his farther flight ? Is 't not himself ?
 I claim thy forfeit bond.

Lady C. What forfeit claimest thou ?

Ment. Lady, thy promised love.

Lady C. My promised love !

Thou vile kidnapping caterer for the gallows !
 Thou that didst sell the life's-blood of thy friend
 For a knave's hire—stealing upon his slumbers,
 As does the crawling thief that robs a hen-roost !
 Thou claim a woman's love ! go claim thy pay,
 Thy hangman's pay—content thee therewithal,—

But, from Joan de Valence, look for nought
Save her abhorrence, and her loathing scorn. [Exit.

Ment. (solus.) Here is a cordial for a qualmy conscience !
A thank-speech from a setter on to sin !
St. Rule defend now this disease be catching,
Or I shall prosper like Sir Puss i' the fable,
Burnt his fool's paw, yet bagged him ne'er a chestnut.
Nay, nay ; I have his bond ; I'll to the south though,
Lest this she-devil be beforehand with me,
And rob me of the what I've dearly worked for. [Exit.

Scene Fifth.

DUMFRIES—CLOISTERS OF THE GREYFRIARS MONASTERY.

(Enter COMYN and BRUCE.)

Com. They wrong me vilely, and thou wrong'st me too,
In giving ear-room for an instant to it,
So foul a fiction.

Br. I pray thee, not so loud. Our friends are near ;
They must not know of this our cloudy greeting ;
Let us within here. [Exeunt.

Scene changes to the interior of the church.

(Re-enter COMYN and BRUCE.)

Com. I—I have secret dealing with King Edward !
What ! I betray our oath-fast covenant !

Br. Ay : it is said so, Comyn : nay, that thou
Didst send him even the authentic bond,
With seal of arms we both did ratify—

Com. Now, by St. Bryde ! this shall be answered for.
Name me my foul defamer.

Br. —And, moreover,
That thou, on sundry grounds of policy,
Didst motion Edward to my taking off,
Pledging thyself, on the contracted day,
To rid the king of Wallace and my brothers.

Com. And hast thou faith for this ?

Br. —'T is said, besides,
That thou hast sent thy cousin, Sir James Comyn,
To be thy doer, and thine hostager,
I' the English court.

Com. But, heaven and earth ! De Bruce,
Dost thou believe all this ?

Br. Nay, but De Comyn, didst thou do all this ?

Com. Save Robert Bruce, no man durst ask that question,
And brook one hour's lease o' the breath did utter it.
But thou art privileged. Name me the villain
Hath drugged thy fancy with this damned tale,
That I may wash mine honour in his blood.

Br. Dost thou deny it, then ?

Com. Do I deny it ?
Dost thou, De Bruce, and darest thou believe it ?

(*Enter Sir JAMES LINDSAY, hastily.*)

Lind. My lords, I pray you pardon this intrusion :
A messenger, and on the fume of haste,
Would speak my Lord of Carrick instantly.

Br. A moment's leave, my Lord of Badenach.

[*Exeunt BRUCE and LINDSAY.*]

Com. (solus.) By all the saints ! but this is passing strange,
And most inopportune. So bravely planned too !
One little week had placed it past the marring.
Should this be guess-work now ? No, no, it cannot be,
For it doth hit each veriest circumstance
Too nicely true for that. Who hath betrayed me ?
There are but two are privy to my purpose,
King Edward and my cousin bears that packet,
And them self-interest seals sure to silence.
But howsoe'er it be, for the either upshot
I will fore-arm me ; to De Bruce out-face it,
But place, meanwhile, mine uncle, with my followers,
Within the call of need. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to the cloisters of the same.

(Enter BRUCE and DAVID WYLIE.)

Br. Oh ! 't is a tale of horror and of shame,
That Scotland long shall weep in tears of blood for !
Alas ! for William Wallace ! Damned Menteith !
Thou worthy co-mate of the traitor Comyn.
He 's in my power ; and thou dost bide thy turn.
Go call me Lindsay and Kirkpatrick hither.
Await me here without. Cheer thee, brave boy ;
I loved him even as thou didst ; and the friend
Thou 'st lost in Wallace, thou shalt find in Bruce. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes again to the interior of the church.

(COMYN walking about. To him enters BRUCE, agitated.)

Com. My Lord of Annandale, that villanous tale—

Br. Is true as thou art false.

Com. As I am false! ha!

Darest thou repeat that charge?

Br. I dare and do,

Even to thy traitor's teeth.

I do impeach thee here of perjury—

Treachery to me, and to thy country treason:

I do accuse thee of my purposed murder;

I do attain thee as a vile accomplice

In that most damned deed of shame, the seizure

Of William Wallace—

Com. Ha! of William Wallace!—

Is he then seized?

Br. Dost thou plead ignorance?

Com. I do, and honestly. If he be seized,
By heaven and all it holds, I had no hand in 't.

Br. Oh, ye were brother-anglers, and Menteith
Has had the better luck, that's all.

Com. Menteith!

Br. Ay, and thy virtuous lady! Paltering knave,
Didst make a shuffle of thy soul-plight oath—

Com. He lies that speaks me so.

Br. Ha! lie, doth he?

Then he who speaks thee so is John de Comyn;

'Tis thou canst best describe him. Here's his hand to it.

(Showing the intercepted packet.)

Com. That packet! Ha! what pilfering knave purloined,
Or traitor rendered that?

Br. Thy worthy cousin:

And here's the key *(drawing his sword)* unlocked the chest
that held it.

Com. What! and my cousin, then, Sir James de Comyn—

Br. Is gone before, to herald thee to hell.
He's still thy messenger: prepare to follow him.

Com. Wouldst thou do sacrilege? This place is holy—

Br. The fitter, therefore, for a holy deed.
In such a place as this didst thou be-mock
The ear of heaven with a two-faced oath.
Call it not sacrilege; it is a sacrifice;
And Heaven, and all good men, will count it so.
Defend thee.

(*BRUCE falls on COMYN, who exclaims*)

Com. Ho! Sir Robert Comyn! ho!

Br. This for my country; this for William Wallace;
And this for Robert Bruce! [*COMYN falls; exit BRUCE.*]

Scene changes to the cloisters.

(*LINDSAY, KIRKPATRICK, and DAVID WYLIE.*)

Lind. Here comes De Bruce; but, heaven! how pale he
looks;

His sword a-bloody, and his look a-wild! (*Enter BRUCE.*)
My lord, I pray thee, what hath happed?

Br. I charged

The traitor with his crimes—rehearsed each circumstance—
Produced my vouching—he did call me liar—
And I—I doubt me, I have slain him, Lindsay.

Kirkp. Doubt'st thou, Sir King; I make it sicker then.

[*Exit.*]

Lind. 'T is not a deed to be but halfly done.

[*Exit.*]

(*Re-enter LINDSAY and KIRKPATRICK.*)

Kirkp. The traitor, and his uncle, Robert Comyn,
Have their quietus now; but their clan's up—

There is no tarrying here ; let us to horse !
Ho ! for Lochmaben Castle.

Lind. Nay, Kirkpatrick,
Rather for Scone, and to the crowning-stone.
There must no dallying now !—the sword is out :
Scotland doth lack a king, and her liege lord
Must buckle on his rights.

Br. He must so, Lindsay,
And he will do it, be it life or death,
A scaffold or a throne. To horse ! to horse, then !
We, first, must prove the mettle of their heels,
And then their bearing in the noble field.
Follow me, faithful boy ; thy services
Are in my heart's roll writ ; nor will they lack
A king's remembering or remuneration.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene First.

LONDON—THE PALACE.

(Enter LADY COMYN.)

Lady C. So ends my goodly plot, my lodging him
'Stead o' the tower, in Fenchurch Street, and in
The wardship of my creature, William Delect,
Ev'n like the rest, miscarried! Lectured too,
Like some poor Magd'lene by a pulseless shaveling!

This monk in mail!—pride-frosted fanatic!
I've been the foot-ball of his scorn too long.
But now

The blood of Valence is a-boil within me!
It drowns the fond, inflames the injured woman,
And quenches every passion but revenge.

But hush! here comes mine uncle and the Queen.

(Enter KING EDWARD and QUEEN MARGARET.)

Ed. Fye, 't is the doting of some crazed monk,
Makes divination of an ill digestion,
And starts a prophet on his stomach's call—
I will appeal me to my cousin here.

Lady C. What is the question, pray thee, good my Lord?

Ed. A foolish vision of a foolish monk,
Touching this traitor Scot, hath scared the Queen
From her sound wits: and she would scare me too
From doing justice on this homicide.
What dost thou think he merits?

Lady C. Death, my Lord,
A traitor's death—death on the gallows-tree—
With every circumstance can give 't addition.

Queen. Fye, fye, Joan! thou dost forget the woman.

Ed. Nay, by my faith, she's in the right on't, wife.
But canst thou read me, cousin, by what spells
This Norland Hercules doth turn the heads
Of all our English women—thine excepted?
For ever since the day ye went from me
To Wallace at St. Alban's, truce-begging,
He's witched the Queen. Were he at large, i' faith,
I would be jealous of him. Tell me now,
I warrant me he vowed himself her knight,
And promised her, when he had slain old Longshanks,
A bran-new husband o' the northern cut,
And half his throne to sit on.

Queen. Fye, my lord,
This jesting suits not with the time or subject,
Or with thy better self. A brave man's fate
Is not fit jest for soldier or for king.

Ed. How chanced, Joan, thou 'scapedst this epidemy?
I warrant me, thou 'st seen him oft in Scotland:
He is a goodly man, ha! is he not—
To fill a woman's eye?

Lady C. He is, indeed, Sir.

Ed. But thou art Scot-proof, English to the core,

And hatest him, I doubt not, even as I do—
That 's as the devil.

Lady C. Sir, I love my country.

Queen. Fye, fye, my Lord, you do forget yourself—
Her husband is a Scot.

Ed. Now, by the Mass,
He is so, wife : and I do hate them so,
I had forgot me : but, mayhap, my cousin,
Like other wives, doth love her husband's enemy.

Queen. Who loves her husband's glory and good name
Best loves her husband's self. Both are at stake now :
And I am jealous for mine husband's honour.

Ed. Nay, pray thee, wife, no more : 't is not a matter
For lady counsel. Scotland again 's a-fire—
One rebel has escaped : but, Heaven to thank,
The greater 's in my power : he shall not 'scape.
He owes me large amend—the past the future,
Call for his death alike : by Heaven he dies !

[*Exit EDWARD.*

Queen. Then, noble Wallace, Heaven have mercy on thee—
Or rather, for thou need'st it more, Heaven pardon thee,
My hasty, wilful, and hot-headed husband !

Lady C. What was this vision that the king did speak of ?

Queen. Oh, it doth make me sad. It is most strange—
But come with me, and I will tell it thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE SECOND.

WESTMINSTER HALL—THE BENCH.

(EDWARD in the centre—SIR PETER MALLORY, *Chief Justice*, and the other Judges, on either side of him, but seated a little lower. At the bar, WALLACE heavily ironed, with a crown of laurel on his head. At his right hand, SIR JOHN DE SEGRAVE, acting Grand Marshal of England; on his left, SIR GEOFFREY HARTLEPOOL, Recorder of London. Behind, SHERIFF, GUARDS, and a crowd of spectators.)

Ed. Thou 'st heard this chronicle of crimes rehearsed,
—And 't is a bloody and a damning one,—
If thou hast aught that may, in mitigation,
Better thee, speak.

Sir Peter Mallory. Answer, thou man of blood.

Wallace. A man of blood,
Sir Justice, I have been : for which may Heaven,
Of its high grace, assoil me ! but the blood
Is on my sword is blood of enemies—
Invaders and usurpers :—He who sent them
To do the wrong should bide the reckoning.

Sir P. M. Art thou not all that, in this royal presence,
I have appeached thee of !

Wall. What 's that ?

Ed. A rebel—

A traitor to thy king—an outlawed felon,
Consort with thieves and caterans, do own
No homestead but the forest, nor no calling
To live a-by but reif and robbery ?

Hast thou not burned our towns, pillaged our churches,
Harried our lands?—for each, the least of which,
The law doth judge thee dead; and for them all,
Doom thee a death cruel and infamous.

Wall. Were law my judge, and its administers
Men who would dare voice forth its oracle
In uprightness and freedom,—’t were light task,
My Lord of England, to redargue what,
Wedding fair actions to ill-favoured names,
Thou wouldst pervert to crimes. But where I stand,
It boots me nothing to defend myself,
Since trial follows doom.

Ed. Darest thou gainsay ’t?—
Art thou not all thou art attainted of,
A rebel and a traitor to thy king?

Wall. And who is he, King Edward?

Ed. Even King Edward.

Wall. I know no king of Scotland of that name.

Ed. I am thy king, and Scotland’s, traitor!

Wall. No.—

To Scotland’s fealty thou hast no claim
Of birthright or election. Thou hast been
Her umpire, her usurper, not her king;
Umpire from her, usurper from thyself;
Never her rightful lord. A despot’s laws
Hallowed a robber’s rights: And might hath been
Of both alike the source and sanctifier.

Sir P. M. Prisoner, in speaking thus, thou doom’st thyself:

By treasonous speech thou dost thy treasonous acts
Avouch and aggravate. Bethink thee, pray,—
What sayest thou to the rest?

Wall. Sir Justice, nothing,
That may avail me here. That I have slain
Full many a subject of the king of England
It is well known : I do acknowledge it—
Nor doth my conscience prick me thereupon :
For I did slay but men, mine enemies ;
The blood of helpless age, of innocent youth,
Of priest or woman, have I never shed.
That I have spoiled your cities and your fields
Is also true :
But I have done it as your enemy,
In open 'gainstanding of open war,
On provocation and on precedent—
And who is he arraigns me thereupon ?

Sir P. M. I do, and on our sovereign lord's behalf,
King Edward's.

Wall. What ! for King Edward ! he, by stratagem,
Did fall on Berwick town upon Good Friday,
And left no Scot alive in 't ; not the priest
On knee before his altar, nor the mother
In her mid throes of birth, the bed-fast beldame,
The shrieking virgin, or the laughing babe,
Till all the mill-dams, then on ebb o' the tide,
Almost a-dry, swelled by this murder-cloud,
Did fill to overflow,—and not one drop
Circled alive, of that but yesternight
Did feed the pulse of thirty thousand Scots !

Or is 't that Edward, in the barns of Ayr,
Did hold his black and bloody Parliament,
Hanging, like hounds in couples on the baulks,
Twelve score, the prime of Scotland's baronage,
Trusted his faith,—unlibelled and unshriven !

(*Enter, hastily, the* EARL OF PEMBROKE.)

Ed. Ha! cousin, welcome. Thou art come in time
To see this valiant, vaunting, would-be king,
Crowned, as he prophesied, at Westminster.
But there is matter in thy look : what news
From Scotland?

Pemb. So it please your highness,
I would impart them to your private ear.

Ed. Nay, out with them : let Wallace hear them : they 're
The last, I guess, that he will hear from Scotland.

Pemb. I would your Grace had otherwise determined ;
But they are these in brief. The traitor Bruce,
How 'scaped I know not, hath arrived in Scotland,
And at Dumfries, in private conference
At the high altar of the Minorites,
Slaughtered my brother-in-law, Sir John de Comyn.

Ed. What, Pembroke! Comyn slaughtered by De Bruce!
And at the altar too!—

Pemb. Even so, my liege :—
Which done, the murderer with his followers,
Lindsay, Kirkpatrick, and his brother Edward,
Fled towards Perth ;—where Fife, even to a man,
Clydesdale and Annandale, Ayr and the Levenox,
Do flock by daily thousands to his standard.

Ed. Ha! is there with him any Scot of note
Save those you named?

Pemb. The outlawed Earl of Lennox,
Sinclair the Bishop of Dunkeld, young Douglas,
Sir Simon Frazer and Sir Gilbert Hay,
With many more. From Sark to John o' Groats,

Scotland is up ; the general rallying-cry,—
Vengeance for Wallace—to the Southrons death !

Ed. Ha ! 't is well thought of. These Scots rebels lack
Some relic of the saint they worship by,
To keep their courage hot : and they shall have it.
Off with that traitor to the gallows, Segrave !—

Seg. What ! now, my liege !—not now—

Ed.

This very instant.

And ere the set of sun, see thou I have
His traitor limbs well packed, to send to Scotland—
They 'll lend some spirit to his brother rebels
To shout their treason cry. Ha ! smilest thou, Scot ?

Wall. O noble Bruce, well hast thou kept thy tryste,
Though fortune proved my let. Thou wilt achieve
What Wallace leaves undone. The lot of Heaven
Doth fall on thee, the younger and the worthier :
And thou, or I misread thy noble nature,
Wilt justify the call. Methinks from far,
I catch the cloud-break of thy coming day,
Bright for thyself, and for thy country, glorious,—
And, in the blessed foreview, die content.
Go on and prosper—win thine own, and wear it—
Brook it long years in peace—be loved, be honoured—
And from thy loins issue a stream of kings
Knows no exhausting, that shall sceptre it
Over this chosen land—in blood and brotherhood
Then one sea-bordered isle—shall rear a race
In mind and mould nerved by their bracing clime
To be the type of manhood, and to shine
The lights and living models of the world.

Ed. What ! is the traitor turned a prophet too ?

Off with the raving second-sighted madman!
Follow me, Pembroke.

Wall. Ere I go, Sir King,
One boon, the first and last that William Wallace
E'er sued thee for: the office of a priest,
And some brief moments for a shriving time.

Ed. By Heaven, thou shalt have none—nor priest nor
shrift,
Nor shriving time. Off to the gallows with him!
And at his peril see no priest come near him.

(A murmur arises among the crowd.)

Ha! who is he dares question or gainsay
Our royal will? What, Winchelsea, is't thou?
Upon thy peril—

Winchel. Be 't at my peril then.
I must not pause, even at thy royal bidding.

Ed. Art thou turned traitor, too, rebellious priest,—
Dost thou not dread a king's displeasure?

Win. Yes:
And therefore dread not thine, but second to 't.
I have another King, another Master,
Must first be served.

Ed. Ha! Segrave, seize on him—
Off to the Tower with him.

Win. Segrave, stand back—
Should he—shouldst thou, but lay one finger on me,
In bar o' the duty I am now upon,
Thyself and kingdom from all mean of grace,
From sin-absolving seal of sacrament,
Even from that moment I do interdict;
And thee thyself declare an excommunicate,
Cut off from holy church.

Queen.

My Lord, my Lord!

The holy friar is dead.

Ed. And if ten thousand friars be dead, I care not—
What's that to me?*Queen.*

Oh, it is much, my Lord!

Would thou hadst listened to my earnest prayer!

Ed. And saved mine enemy to save thy friar.*Queen.* Nay, nay, to save thyself. His death doth prove
That vision was prophetic. Part's fulfilled—
I shudder at the rest.*Pemb.*

What vision's this

That doth disturb your highness so?

Queen.

O Pembroke!

But 't is too late. The holy friar John,
Warned in a vision, did foretell that he
Should sicken at the very moment Wallace
Received his doom:—and he did sicken suddenly,
Even on the turn of noon:—and that, moreover,
Their spirits should take flight at the same instant,
And he but now is dead.*Ed.*

Is it so marvellous

That an old brain-sick, bed-rid visioner,
Should guess so near his death's hour?*Queen.*

And, besides,

It was revealed him that the one same instant,
From th' penal place assoil'd, should see them both
Mansioned in Paradise.*Pemb.*

And was this all, madam?

Queen. Alas! it was not all. The vision bore,
That from the moment Wallace had his doom,
His doomsman ne'er should listen happy news
Nor live one hour of peace: that he should never

Set foot on Scottish land, nor his posterity
 Hold inch thereof: that he himself should die,
 Baffled and baulked even within sight of it.

Pemb. But, madam, gave this friar no sign in token
 His vision was a true one, and not purely
 His fever's prophecy?

Queen. He gave this sign :
 That on the instant that his spirit parted,
 The Abbey bells, even by a long hour's space—

(*Enter LADY COMYN hurriedly.*)

Lady C. My Lord, my Lord!

Ed. What now, I pray thee, cousin?
 Art thou mad too? Is there another friar
 Turned prophet for the nonce?

Lady C. My Lord, my Lord,
 The inmates of the Abbey, all aghast,
 Have fled their monastery. Some half-hour gone,
 Good Friar John did part; and ever since,
 Unwrung by mortal hand, the Abbey bells
 Have tolled most mournful and unearthly music,
 Nor can they be a-stopped. The frightened citizens
 Do gather round in crowds, agape with terror,
 Looking for something strange. (*Enter OFFICER.*)

Ed. More miracles?
 Art thou, too, charged with marvels? what's thy news?

Off. Tidings, my liege, from Scotland, that De Bruce
 Is crowned at Scone, and all beyond the Forth
 In arms for him.

(*Enter another OFFICER.*)

Ed. Art thou from Scotland, too?
 Out with thy secret, man!

Off. May't please your highness,

John de Bretagne, the captain of your host,
Hath been defeated by the rebel Scots,
And with most slaughterous loss.

Ed. More news from hell?
Well, sir?

(3d OFFICER.)

Off. My Lord, in haste I come to give you notice,
Berwick hath fallen—Dumfries and Stirling Castles
Are in the rebels' hands—Dunbar's besieged—
Roxburgh in jeopardy—Perth hath surrendered.

Ed. Another post from purgatory, Clifford,
With his black budget—

(Enter CLIFFORD.)

What quaint masquer's here,
Thou play'st Sir Usher to?

Clif. A herald, charged
To tender ransom for Sir William Wallace;
He craves immediate speech.

Ed. Ransom for Wallace!
There's one, and but one fee can ransom him,
And that is Bruce's head.

(Enter HERALD.)

Well, sir, what says
That rebel runaway? Holds he not treason,
Crime black enough, that he must double damn him
With sacrilege and murder? for his fellow,
What doth the rebel offer us?

(GRIMSBY, *the Herald.*)

Grim. Three thousand pounds in gold—the town of Ber-
wick,
And Roxburgh Castle, to be thine for ever.

Ed. He offers us our own; he's generous! Well, sir,

An' if they be refused? But here comes one,
(*Enter GLOSTER.*)

Or I misguess, will save me further breath,
And give thee answer. Thou art from the Elms
At Smithfield, Gloster, art thou not?

Glost. I am.

Ed. Here's one from Bruce tenders me tempting ransom
For that Scots traitor.

Glost. Wallace is beyond
The reach of ransom or of wrong—he's dead.

Queen. Dead!

Lady C. Impossible! what! dead already!
'Twas but even now he did receive his sentence.

Ed. Hear'st thou, Sir Herald, art thou answered now?

Grim. I am. A bloody and a damned answer;
With bloody reckoning shall 't be answered to.

Ed. Recount the manner of his death, Lord Gloster,
And give this Scot assurance. But what ails thee—
Thine eyes are red—hast thou been weeping, man?—
How did the traitor die?

Glost. My liege, his death,
Even like his life, was noble. In my time,
I've stood the brunt of many a well-fought field,
And seen the road to death take many paths,
Painful to tread, and pitiful to look on,
But never did this salty rheum bescald
My soldier's eye before.

Ed. Gloster, I read thee,
Choose fitter phrase in speaking of a traitor.
'Thou talk'st as thou wert a fee'd rhetorist,
Hired to stick flowers upon his monument.
'To the circumstances: Did he call in question

The only devil of our knot was wanting,
And he of all the blackest and most damned,
Come to refresh the mem'ry of our guilt.
Bloody Plantagenet ! here is thy hangman
Come for his murder-fee. [Exit LADY COMYN.

(*Enter MENTEITH.*)

Ed. What now, Menteith ?

Ment. My liege, I bring thee heavy news from Scotland.

Ed. Then keep them to thyself, sir. Am I cursed
Never to hear but croakings ? am I damned,
To be for ever stunned with Scotland ! Scotland !

Grim. Sir King, thou art. That name, thy conscience-knell,
Shall still be pealed into thy startled ear,
Till death doth seal it deaf. My mercy errand
Thy murder-mockery of law and justice,
Hath cruelly foreclosed. Hear now the after-say,
From Scotland and her king. For this foul deed,
I do denounce thee war, war and defiance,
War to the dagger's hilt,—an unsheathed sword,
Which this day's deed doth edge Heaven's minister
And vowed executor,—and which shall never
Visit its scabbard more, while thou dost live,
Or one that calls thee master shall inherit
Foot of that land owned Wallace for a son.

[Exit GRIMSBY.

THE END.

JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND.

A Tragedy.

IN FIVE ACTS.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

JAMES THE FIRST,	<i>King of Scotland.</i>
WALTER STEWART, EARL OF ATHOLE,	<i>Uncle of the King.</i>
ROBERT STEWART,	{ <i>His Grandson, Chamberlain to the King.</i>
SIR ROBERT GRÆME,	
EARL OF ANGUS,	{ <i>Brother to the deceased Earl of Stratherne.</i>
EARL OF ORKNEY,	
SIR WILLIAM CRICHTON,	<i>Chancellor.</i>
SIR ANDREW GRAY,	{ <i>Knights attending on the King.</i>
SIR HERBERT MAXWELL,	
SIR DAVID DUNBAR,	
SIR WALTER LUVALE,	<i>A Knight.</i>
PATRICK GRÆME,	<i>Son of Sir Robert Græme.</i>
SIR JOHN HALL,	{ <i>Conspirators.</i>
THOMAS HALL,	
THOMAS CHAMBERS,	
CHRISTOPHER CHAMBERS,	
CAHOUN,	

Lords of Council—Estates of Parliament—Mob—Soldiers, &c.

WOMEN.

JOAN of Somerset,	<i>Queen of Scotland.</i>
CATHERINE DOUGLAS,	{ <i>Ladies attending on the Queen.</i>
ELIZABETH DOUGLAS,	
MORAG,	<i>A Highland Spaewife.</i>

ACT I.

Scene First.

EDINBURGH—AN APARTMENT IN THE HOUSE OF THE EARL
OF MONTEITH.

*(Enter, in conversation, Sir ROBERT GRÆME and
PATRICK GRÆME.)*

Græme. Hotly I took my prisoning in Dunbar ;
And when he named Justiciar of Scotland,
The place he knew Duke Murdac promised me,
Sir Robert Lauder, of the Bass, profest
Long time mine enemy—

P. Græme. From Sark to Sumboro',
The land cried shame on him ! In all men's thoughts
Thou wert designed the fittest and most capable
For that high trust.

Gr. 'T was but the weather-gaw
Bodeth the weather-break. I had some favour—
There's mine offence—with his late noble kinsmen,
The slaughtered house of Albany : and now
I stand no longer in my nephew's shoes,
Tutor to young Stratherne, the simple knight,
Sir Robert Græme, must fare as did his friends,
Allan of Otterburne, Sir Malcolm Fleming,

The Bishop of Argyle, and all on whom
Shone the set sun of Albany.

P. Gr. His uncle,
Earl Walter, is thy friend, and Robert Stewart,
The Earl's gay grandson. They are powerful,
And favourites at Court. They had no hand
In that so bloody act—so bloodily
He's visited upon the race of Albany—
His brother, the young Duke of Rothsay's murder.

Gr. Ay, they were sakeless there; for then they stood not
Next in degree the throne.

P. Gr. And now they do—
Gr. They have for royalty as sharp a stomach
As e'er Duke Robert had, of Albany.

P. Gr. Is it suspected so?

Gr. I'm sure of it,
And glad to boot; for until Walter Stewart
Sits King of Scotland in James Stewart's saddle
It will be Lentrán for thyself and me.
Athole is puzzling over ancient prophecies,
As double and as mazed mysterious
As ever Delphian or Druid spake,
Which he unriddles to the tune that likes him;
And Robert Stewart would be Robert Bruce,
A king, apeing his great progenitor,
And doing Bannockburn in tournaments!
I feed their humours both.

P. Gr. But the first James
Is firmly on his throne. The Commons love
His genial nature fellows with their mirth,
And makes their junketings and homely sports
Matter his royal songs: nor less for that

With the strong staff of law he doth maintain
 His humblest liegeman's rights against the proudest,
 Be he Sir Priest or Peer. Courtiers and ladies
 Love his gay wit, his amorous minstrelsies,
 Shows, and court pageants—soldiers his knightly courage;
 And, in the matter of the Albanies,
 He hath so fenced him with the fellowship
 Of Scotland's mightiest, Athole, and Douglas,
 Angus, and Crawford, and Dunbar, and Orkney,
 The Hays, the Ogilvies,—his cause is theirs,
 His crime, his danger theirs. 'T was their assize
 Adjudged Duke Murdac and his sons of treason.

Gr. The scythe that sweeps the gowan on the green
 Slays not the gowan's roots. The roots of Albany
 Run deep and far through Scotland's baronage;
 They're bleeding now beneath the mower's swathe,
 But they will blow anon. There's not a house
 Of mark in Scotland weeps not kindred blood
 In that black tragedy. With wit to work it,
 Here's mine will render gold. For the great lords,
 Their love is on the sour. The laws late passed,
 At the king's instance, by the Three Estates
 Nulling the jurisdiction they assumed
 Over their vassals' lives, and those prohibit
 Ranging the land with swarms of followers
 In time of peace, o'ertax their means to keep,
 Have so embittered them—

P. Gr. These acts methought
 Thyself had counselled them.

Gr. The most inhibitive
 That touched the sorest on the quick I drew it;—
 It sopped the Commons—writ me down a patriot—

Feeding on freits and fortunes in the clouds,
He dares but hint in circumloquitur.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene Second.

ANOTHER APARTMENT IN THE SAME.

(*Enter, in conversation, the EARL OF ATHOLE and
SIR ROBERT GRÆME.*)

Græme. Kings have long hands, my lord. 'T is a strong
measure

This our liege lord requireth of his Parliament :—
But then he knows we 've loyal consciences
And melting bowels to a royal wooer ;—
This castle-seizing, and this swapping earldoms
Without the owner's leave ! Marry, his Grace
Doth make a shrewd excamb—Buchan for March,
Heather for corn, and tods and ptarmigans
For beeves and fat kain hens ! But the Earl of March—
I crave his pardon, the new Earl of Buchan—
How doth it relish him ?

Athole. Humph ! He must swallow it,
Digest it how he may—

Gr. Now by St. Bathan !
Were I Dunbar, liever than yield me rood
Of that brave heritage his fathers owned
In the broad bounds of Merse, from Bass to Berwick,
The rich green holms of Leader, Tweed, and Teviot,
For the black moors of Buchan.—

Athole. Sooth, the Earl

Swears in his mood by every saint he wots of,
 Were he once more within his own good castle,
 He would defy both king and Parliament
 To fetch him out again! They 'd find it game
 Like hopeless as my Lord of Salisbury did
 To oust his stout old grandame from her cover,
 Black Agnes of Dunbar, the Southron's sow,
 Made farrow suddenly, and shot her love-shafts
 Right to the English heart.

Gr. 'T is bravely spoken,
 So he will stand to it. How say our Lords?
 Spy they not here a writing on the wall
 Prophetic to themselves?

Athole. They chafe at it.

Gr. And for the cogent cause—the oft defection
 O' the House of March, whereto near neighbourhood
 Did much encourage, to the English side—
 How say they to this reason for transporting them
 To north temptation, moating Forth and Tay
 Betwixt the devil and them?

Athole. They count it cloak
 Too scant to screen the shame of robbery.

Gr. And these new-fangled acts against the baronage—
 And this instalment of the royal ransom—
 How do they brook all this?

Athole. So much impatiently,
 They have appealed me earnestly, as next
 The throne in blood, to publicly protest
 This day against them all, as acts o'erpass
 The royal privilege, with word and weapon,
 Binding themselves to stand by me.

- Gr.* The which
Thou 'lt do, past doubt, my Lord.
- Athole.* I have declined it.
- Gr.* Hast thou, my Lord?
- Athole.* My nephew's hot in blood—
- Gr.* But with this warrandice—
- Athole.* And then thou knowest
The Earldom of Stratherne—
- Gr. (aside.)* —Ay, there he sopped thee.
- Athole.* —That royal appanage, when it was found,
Thy nephew, Malise Græme could not retain it,
As though descended from the royal stock,
'T was by his mother's side— (*Walks to the window, looking
out and listening.*)
- Gr. (aside.)* That stolen meat
Hath glued thy glutton's lips.
- Athole.* —To me he passed it,
Gifting thy brother's son, for lieu thereof,
The Earldom of Monteith.
- Gr.* But mark, my Lord,
'T is given thee but for life. No blood of thine
Inherits after thee—it sinks, engulfed
Into that bog is bottomless, the Crown.
And when thy nephew died, my Lord of Mar,
His princely heritage was thine of right,
He clutched it all himself.
- Athole.* He did that foully.
(*Again walks to the window, looks out, and listens.*)
- Gr.* What spectacle, my Lord, invites thee so?
(*Goes to the window.*)
- A marvellous crowd! Oh, 't is the blind old minstrel,
Halbert of Haddington. He draweth audience,

Fuller and firmlier tethered by the ear
 Than e'er a preaching friar o' them all.
 Who texts his theme to-day?

Athole.

Thomas of Erceldoune.

Gr. Then 't is some sedging tale—Sir Tristram, may be—

Athole. Nay, but his prophecies. Is it not strange,—
 Thou dost not think them sooth?

Gr.

Of prophecies

Time is assayer and interpreter,
 And with his sieve he sifts, unerringly,
 The false ones from the true.

Athole.

But Erceldoune's—

True Thomas is the name they've purchased him,
 So perfectly he hit the happenings.

The sudden death of our Third Alexander,
 Killed from his horse, at Kinghorn, he foretold it
 The day before it fell.

Gr.

Ay, at Dunbar,

To th' Earl of March, the very hour o' the day, too,
 When that black tempest should blow over Scotland.

Athole. And when the corpse of Wallace, counted dead,
 Was, by his English jailors, forth the window
 Flung on a dunghill, in the town of Ayr,
 Thence by his nurse, removed for stolen burial—
 The man was sent with tidings to the Faile,
 Where Thomas lodged—

Gr.

—He laughed his news to scorn,—

Pledging his verity, his life thereto,
 That ere he died, was then accounted dead,
 Should thousands many die, on bloody field,
 That he should sweep the English forth the land
 And thrice for Scotland conquer peace in arms.

Athole. And so it all fell out.

Gr. Touching thine ancestor—

The Bruce was then a babe—he prophesied :

“He rocks in cradle, there, shall wear a crown,

And have all Scotland in his royal leading.”

Athole. He did. 'T was strange. And there be things as
strange

Yet unaccomplished. Thou hast heard o' them—?

Gr. There 's one remembers me.—That a king's son,

Of Bruce's blood, and brother of a king,

Whose son shall dy an hostage for a king,

At his own dying shall have on a crown.

Athole. Now, by St. Bede ! it is that prophecy

The blind old man is rhyming through the streets.

Gr. Indeed ! He 's bold : minstrels claim privilege,

And blind old Halbert is a favourite.

Yet there 's a prophecy, even he will not

Venture repeating it.

Athole. Of Erceldoune's ?

Gr. That prophesies this very year of grace,

Fixing 't by marks as clear definitive

As it were written in the Almanack,

There shall a king be done to dead in Scotland.

Athole. Nay, by my faith, even that same prophecy,

He did rehearse it too !

Gr. Should the king hear of it ?

Athole. He doth but laugh at them ; names them for
mockery,

Heraldic amphibologies, swearing he hath

More faith in Tristram and his wondrous hounds,

Hodain and Pettierewe, that Thomas sings of,

Than all his pack of Pythian parables—

The selcouth sights he saw in lift and lee,
 Lions and libbards, founmarts, mouldiewarps,—
 A dozen Daniels had not construed them.

(GRÆME *shakes his head distrustingly.*)

Thou seem'st not of his mind—

Gr.

Be 't gift or guess,

The Rhymer's prophecies have fallen so true,
 So without fail, that till this year be out—

Athole. Then thou wilt fright me with that prophecy
 They have in Athole—

Gr.

With what prophecy?

Athole. Touching our house. There's not a dame in
 Athole

But holds 't as Holy Writ—rhyming 't o' nights
 For music to her distaff. Some say Erceldoune
 Himself 'twas uttered it. O' the wiser sort,
 I do remember in my boyhood's time,
 There were did mock at it; but strange attesting
 It hath received since then.

Gr.

How says 't, my lord?

Athole. “In Athole's bounds betide man-child is born,
 Hath fingers six, and cow with triple horn,
 Last of his name and worst, let Athole's heir
 That child man grown avoid to counter where
 Two rivers join—for meet they at that ford,
 No Athole-Stewart shall be Athole's lord.”*

* As restricted to the Athole-Stewarts, this prophecy was fulfilled. After the murder of James I., his Queen married another James Stewart, a younger son of the Lord of Lorne, and their eldest son was, by James II., created Earl of Athole. The large possessions, however, which had appertained to the title, were subdivided and much reduced. Portions of

Gr. But this six-fingered brat, this three-horned heifer,
Were never monstered of the same year's calving.

Athole. Ay, and in Athole too—

Gr. And do they live ?

Athole. Chafed by their chanting that eternal rhyme,
And crowds came wondering at the monster-beast,
My grandson, Robert Stewart, in his heat,
Slew 't as he came from hunting, with his spear.

Gr. And the man-monster ?

Athole. Would have slain him too—

For he had crossed him oft ; once, in particular,
Rescuing by main reprise a fair young wench,
My grandson, in his boil of youthful blood,
Maugre her leave would make his bed-fellow.
We hunted him through Athole ; but he foiled us—
And 't was reported he had passed the sea,
To join the wars in France.

Gr. Where questionless,

To prove the prophecy but beldame's gospel,
Belched by some jongler in his drunken dwalm,
He perished in the ruin overswept,
The remnant of that once so goodly band
Followed the Douglas, and thy gallant nephew
The Constable of France.

Athole. Nay, 't is reported me,

Within this week he hath been seen in Athole.

(Bell sounds in the distance.)

them were conferred on those who had been most active in the capture of Græme and his fellow-conspirators, as on Duncanson (the progenitor of the Robertsons of Strowan) and others. "Atholiæ comitatum habuit," says Major of the new Earl, "mutilatum tamen."

Gr. There sounds our summons to the Parliament.
Of all our baronage is none will venture
The task thou hast declined ?

Athole. To publicly protest
Against the royal acts ? Not one.

Gr. Didst thou mistrust them—
Would they not stand by thee ?

Athole. They would, I doubt not.

Gr. And were there one so bold to peril it,
Would they uphold him, think'st thou ?

Athole. To a man.
They are so much displeased, touching this matter,
In heart so much at one, they do but lack
A mouth and mover in 't.

Gr. Then make we haste,
I fain would speak them ere th' Estates are met.

Athole (going to the window).
Again that antient chime ! Is it not strange !
" Whose son shall die an hostage for a king,
Himself at dying shall have on a crown !"

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene Third.

A NARROW STREET NEAR THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

(*A great Mob gathered round PATRICK GRÆME, who has been
addressing them.*)

1 *Mob.* The king's own uncle and Sir Robert Græme,
So mighty in the law, our pleaders, saidst thou ?
My certie ! it's brave news. Since the black day

When they took off the good Duke Murdac's head,
I have not heard the like.

But are they stanch?

Lovers of Scotland—traist friends to the people,
As good Duke Murdac was?

P. Græme.

I've heard them say 't,

Were there familiars, liefer than sleep
Under an English blanket, they would roll
Their rachan round them on a drift of snow
And make their bolster of a boulder stone!

They will not hunt with hound, nor hawk with falcon,
So they be well avised concerning it,
That it was whelped or fledged to south the Border.

2 *Mob.* Nay, an' they hate our neighbours all so deadly,
They're Christian men, past doubt, and honest patriots.

(ATHOLE and GRÆME pass rapidly in the background on their way to the meeting of the Estates.)

P. Græme. And, by St. Giles! the very men we spake of,
My Lord of Athole and Sir Robert Græme—
A cheer for them!—*(the mob huzza)*—Now let us after them,
To the Parliament; and while they plead for us
Against those traitor lords, would fleece poor Scotland
To buy us back an Englishman for king,
Raise we a shout shall make old Arthur's rock
Dirl to the back-bone, and arede these lords,
These tax and tallage lords, that we are legion.
Come, follow me, my friends.

[Exit PATRICK GRÆME, followed by Mob.]

Morag,—The Spaewife of Lochaber, who has been in the crowd, remains looking after them.

Ay, follow him,

Ye rowting raff of nowte and neer-do-weels,
 And a black gate he'll lead you. Ho, young cock!
 Thy roost right weel I ken it by thy crawling.
 Ay, and the auld cock learned thee that braw sang!
 Bravely wots Morag what is in the wind,
 And she will watch and watch, and ward and warn
 The bonny king. Love-service for love-service! [Exit.

SCENE Fourth.

THE HALL OF PARLIAMENT.

(*The Estates are met, the KING presiding. SIR ROBERT GRÆME is on his legs as if he had just done addressing the KING.*)

King. In name of the Estates of Parliament!

Gr. My Liege, I speak their mind.

King. Is't so, my Lords? (*They bow assent.*)

Beshrew me, then, there's none can charge your oracle
 That it doth Philippize. Hard things and harsh
 Sir Robert Græme hath spoke against your king,
 Raking my reign for text of obloquy
 Beside the present cause, which, as I understand it,
 Is not an inquest on my life and laws,
 But simply question touching an instalment
 Of certain monies to the King of England,
 Due for my maintenance—

Gr.

Thy restitution

From forced captivity in breach of truce
 And a false pirate's grip—robbing poor Scotland
 To gorge his coffers are too full already.

King. Say that the seizing Sinclair and myself
At Flamborough, maugre our eight years' truce,
By the Fourth Henry, was unkingly done,
An act of piracy—I'll not gainsay it.
Cry shame thereon, and I will echo thee—
Still must our debt be paid. The faith of Scotland
Is pledged to it. For dowry of my Queen
They have abated much—part is paid down,
And for the residue there lie impledged
Many our noblest youths and worthiest
In the Sixth Henry's keep. My noble cousin,
Lord Athole's heir, died in the Tower in London,
Our hostage unredeemed. Must Crawford, too,
Must Gordon, Oliphant, and Ogilvie,
Thy nephew Malise, Ruthven, Lyon, Moubray,
All in their English dungeon, rot unransomed,
Have pawned their bodies for the faith of Scotland?

Gr. It needeth not—albeit our nation's poor,
And all unbroke to bear these heavy burdens;—
For in thy kinsmen's time, the Albanies,
There was no tax imposed. For peer and people
That was a blessed time! The poor man then
Looked on the increase of his flocks and fields
As blessing, not as curse. His garners filled
Untaxed, his cattle multiplied—

King. And then
Some Angus Murray, or some Angus Duff,
Macdonald, or Macarthur, or Macrore,
Came with a tail of Redshanks from the hills
And swept them hoof and horn! And when the widow,
The wretched widow they had robbed of all,
Sobbed out her curse on them, her naked feet

They shod with iron, and with savage glee
Bade post to court and tell her friend the Regent !

Right arm made right—law was but privilege :—
The poor man was a serf—his lord might hang him,
For cause or none, over his castle's gate,
As he might hang his hound ! To kirk and market
A man went furnished as to battle-field,—
And he who journeyed twenty mile from home
Shrived ere he went, and made his testament !

I found it so, and booked my vow in heaven
Though I should lead me a dog's life, or die
A dog's death, mending it, this should not last—
Never to slack me till, throughout broad Scotland,
At mid-day or mid-night, the castle's key
Should keep the castle, and the bush the cow !

Have I not kept mine oath ? Who sows the seed
Now reaps the grain ; the herd is his who rears it ;
Lording and loon hath but one law and knows it ;
And thou may'st journey from the Brig of Berwick
To Beaul's Firth with but thy staff to keep thee !
That untaxed time, that golden age of Albany,
It was a blessed time—for thieves and robbers !
Better is 't not to gift the petty fee
Upholds the law that doth uphold the whole ?

Gr. Less bloody was the license of that time
Than is the law profest its remedy.—

Under the gentle rule of Albany,
In twenty years, by heading or by hanging,
Scarce were there fifty died. In two years' time
This boasted law cut off a fifteen hundred—

King. Robbers and thieves—would in two years have slain
Their fifteen thousands—

Gr. In this fifteen hundred,
Perished Duke Murdac and the house of Albany,—
The Earl of Lennox—were they thieves and robbers?
Was that their libel?

King. Ask these friends, are round thee—
The Earls of Athole, Douglas, Angus, Orkney,
The Lords of Lorn, Dalkeith, Montgomery,
Sir Gilbert Hay the Constable of Scotland,
Sir Walter Ogilvie, and others there
Who were their judges and their sentencers.

Gr. The headsman's axe on Stirling's bloody knoll
That lopped themselves, laid not their forests low,
Their stately castles or their fruitful farms
In the wide bounds of Fife, Menteith, and Lennox—
These rich revenues once they answered all
And left the lieges free.

King. They were the crown's,
And to the crown are fallen by forfeiture—
A king's necessities are much and many.

Gr. If troops of English scullions be necessities,—
If masquers, minstrels, quaint artificers,
Quiristers, limners, be necessities,
If columns charactered with rich devices
In sumptuous palaces,—if orchards bowered
With every plant of fragrance or of fruit,
If trellised gardens, flowery terraces,
If parks for pleasure—

King. And they are necessities
To soften a rude age. If the Fourth Henry
Unkingly seized me and in breach of truce,
Nobly he reared whom wrongly he detained,
Schooling me duly in each gentle art

Might grace a knight, a monarch, or a man.
 And, so that Heaven do but accord me life,
 And treason leisure to achieve my hope,
 I will engraft upon our rougher rind
 The fair humanities he taught my youth.

Gr. And fleece thy people and escheat thy nobles
 To fat a flock of foreign cormorants,
 Of cooks, and choristers, and ballad-makers.
 They've swallowed Fife, Menteith, the Levenax,
 And Mar already. Ross and the West Isles
 Are in their glutton's gorge. My Lord of March
 Hath a rich earldom—hence 't is found the son
 Sinned in the sire, and he must render it!
 Whose turn is next? My Lord of Athole there,
 My Lord of Douglas, they have brave domains,
 And so they must produce their chartulars:—
 And be their dot awanting or awry,
 They forfeit to the Crown—a muscle's quake
 Hath nulled their virtue and validity!
 Scotland, that scorned to stoop a vassal neck
 To England's Edward with his hundred thousands,
 Will brook no English king upon her throne—
 Will brook no English minions in her court—
 Will brook no English manners in her halls—
 Will brook no English tribute on her lands—
 All these thou hast imposed.

Orkney to Angus (aside). Now brimstone broil him,
 We did not warrant that.

Gr. Sir James of Scotland!
 For that in breach thy bond and crowning oath,
 To "keep, defend, and govern ilk estate
 After the law and customs of the realm,

Nought there against to alter, eik, or minish,
 But with consent of the estates,"—thou hast,
 Listening to foreign minions and miscounsel,
 Our wholesome, antient, home-born usages,
 For light imported fopperies annulled,
 And wasteful luxuries, for charge thereof
 Grinding thy commons, forfeiting thy nobles,
 And by the gibbet or the headsman's block,
 Ending on trumped and tyrannous pretext,
 The true-born line and issue of our kings—

(Going up to the KING and laying his hand on his shoulder)

As a devourer of thy people's wealth,
 As a destroyer of thy people's rights,
 I do, in name of the Estates of Parliament,
 Arrest thee here to answer their arraign !

(Turning to the Lords of Parliament.

Is it not so, my Lords, as I have said ?

(All remain silent, the greater number exchanging looks of astonishment and indignation.)

King. (After regarding the Assembly for some time steadily and with dignity)—

Is 't so, indeed ? Hath he spoke warranted ?
 Vouch ye to this for likeness of your king ?
 If so, 't is bold ; if not, he hath done treason.

Orkney. We gave no warrant to 't, nor weeting neither
 This his misloyal and mismannered speech.

King. Hath he in presence none doth second him ?

(They are silent.)

I'm glad there's but a solitary traitor,
 And he not one is new or unsuspect ;
 It saves me spend of ire or argument——

A second would have chafed and troubled me.

(*To SIR ROBERT STEWART, his Chamberlain*)

To-day, by promise to thy noble grandsire,
 I boune me to the north for gallant sport,
 To hunt the wild bull in the Athole woods ;
 Good cousin, pray thee for thy prisoner,
 Look to this traitor ; lodge him in the Castle,
 In the sure keeping of Sir William Crichton ;
 And (*rising*) till we meet at Perth in Parliament,
 Adjourn we question of his punishment
 And of King Henry's claim. [*Exit, followed by Lords.*]

Gr.

So fares the fool

Trusteth the windy warrant of a crowd !

(*Aside, as SIR ROBERT STEWART advances with a guard to take him into custody.*)

Now Patrick with his piebalds to the rescue !

Or I've o'ershot my mark.

[*Exit guarded ; a tumult, and loud shouting heard without, clashing of arms, and cries of A Græme ! a Græme ! To the rescue ! &c.*]

Scene Fifth.

THE PIER AT LEITH.

(*Enter the KING, as in conversation with SIR ROBERT STEWART, and followed by SIR ANDREW GRAY and SIR DAVID DUNBAR.*)

King. Fye, take 't not so to heart, my gentle cousin,
 Thou hast no blame in this.

Stewart.

That blow so stunned me,

My senses reeled and left me for what time
Sufficed that rascal mob—

King. Nay, with their numbers,
And thy so slender guard—(*looking out*)—What hubbub 's
here ?

(*Enter SIR HERBERT MAXWELL.*)

A second rising of the Cowgate, Maxwell ?

Maxwell. 'T is but the poor old spaewife of Lochaber,
Mad Morag, in her lunes, a mob of boys
And idlers teasing her.

King. See no one harms her,
Nor mocks her in her mood, nor troubles her.

[*Exeunt STEWART and MAXWELL.*]

Sir Andrew Gray, what think'st thou of this sibyl ?

Gray. Some count her mad, some a divineress—
Some say she visions with the second sight,
And some that stout potations put the spirit in her.

King. But for thyself, which is the cause potential ?

Gray. Any may serve, or all be confluent.

King (*musingly, and as if to himself*).

Her tale so true, and yet her cause of knowledge
So wild, fantastical !

Gray. What speaks your Grace of ?
Methought you laughed at both her trade and tribe,
These fate-and-fortune-spellers in the clouds,
Prophets in trance, and bedlams when they waken.

King. And so I do ; and yet, last autumn 't was
This woman made me quit the siege of Roxburgh,
My gallant host disbanding suddenly,
Some think ingloriously, when one short week
Had made that strength mine own. Thou 'rt not o' them
Have ruled that act caprice or cowardice.

Gray. For that I know it strangled in the nest
A black conspiracy. But 't was the Queen,
Methought, discovered it.

King. This woman haunted her,
Crossing her path, whene'er she went abroad,
With riddling rhymes and quaint indicatives,
'Tokened a danger and a deadly plot,
And darkly its wherefrom. Sir Robert Lauder,
At my wife's instance, searched the matter out,
And found the beldame's visions verities.
With haste the Queen rode to my camp at Marchmont;
Another week and she had come too late.

(*A tumult without. Enter MORAG struggling with SIR ROBERT STEWART, who is attempting to keep her back.*)

Morag (to SIR ROBERT STEWART).
Off! off! thou bloody whelp of bloody hound!
Thou made the keeper of the royal fold!
Wo to the shepherd sleeps when thou art watcher!
The wolf is on the wold. Who let him there?
Where's the old fox? Stole to the moor to meet
The wolf and wolf's cub at the murder-cairn!

King (to SIR ROBERT STEWART).
Nay, good, my cousin, let her have her way.
Hinder her not. She's earned her privilege.

Morag (wildly, and as if to herself).

In that year, when wine and ale,
Frozen in their icy pail,
By the piece are weighed in sale;—
In that year, when the *Black Hour*
Falls on Scotland, tarn and tower,
Shall be slain a king in bower!

(Placing herself betwixt the KING and the place of embarkation)—

Turn back, Sir King! thou must not cross the sea:

Turn back, Sir King! thou art denied to pass.

King. And who denieth me, good woman?

Morag.

Houart.

King. Houart!—and who is Houart?*

Morag.

He 's a king.

King. There 's but one king in Scotland—that 's myself.

This Houart must be a pretender-king—

Some Donald Balloch come alive again.

Morag (laying her hand on the KING's shoulder).

Cross not the sea, James Stewart, King of Scotland—

James Stewart, King of Scotland, I debar thee!

(The KING, by his gestures, showing some impatience, she drops on her knee)

Beseech thee do not pass—for an' thou do—

King. What then?—

Morag.

(Rising, and with solemnity.)

Back on the 'live thou never shalt return!

King. Nay, nay, good woman, I have crossed this ferry

And back an hundred times but skaith, and shall,

I nothing doubt me, with the help of Heaven,

Do it as oft again.

(Enter WALTER STRATOUN.)

* To the historians who record this incident in the life of King James, the name Houart (or Houthart), given by the Highland prophetess to her familiar spirit, has proved a puzzle. But is it not just the Gaelic *Thuiart*, dicit (pronounced *Houart*), in other words, *the voice*, the most obvious form in which a supposed preternatural communion would be held, or preternatural communications received, by an insane visionary dwelling amid the solitudes of Lochaber?

Stratoun. The Queen's embarked,
And waits your Highness.

Morag (earnestly). It was Houart sent me—
Wilt thou not heark to Houart?—

King. Not now, *Morag.*
My bark's afloat, her shrouds are shaken free,
The flood's at full, the wind is blowing fair,
And the Queen waits.

Morag. (*Sorrowfully, and as to herself.*)
If he do cross that ferry,
Back on the 'live he never shall return.

King. (*Aside to STEWART and GRAY.*)
It was this Houart, as she said, advised her
Of that conspiracy. Pray ye, discover me,
If he be made of other stuff than moonshine,
That we may deal with him.

[*Exeunt the KING with his attendants, except
STEWART and GRAY.*]

Stewart. (*to Morag, who mutters something to herself, without seeming to regard him.*)

Where is King Houart?
Why comes he not himself? Where bideth he?
His royal palace is a heather-bothy
Shrouded in mist, and pestilent with reek
Among the mountains of Lochaber—is't not?

Thy devil would play dummy, witch! would he?
Yonder's, I trow, will loose his tongue—the joughs!
And eggs and urchins we shall find a plenty
To pelt the Highland witch—where wons this Houart?

Morag. (*Regarding him sternly.*)
Sir Robert Stewart "last and worst"—ay, worst—
His sib and his familiar, fye!—But he

Hath his weird too—for, “meet they at that ford,
No Athole Stewart shall be Athole’s lord.”

Stewart.

(*Shaking her fiercely.*)

So thou hast learned that Rannoch rant too, hast thou,
Thou curst colloquer with the devil?

Gray.

Nay,

His Grace enjoined us to deal gently with her.

Wilt thou not tell me, my good Morag, now,

Where Houart is? I love King James’s life,

And fain would speech with him. Where’s Houart, pray
thee?

Morag. Seest yon black cloud is sailing to the North,
For convoy to the king?

Gray.

I see a cloud—

Morag. Houart is riding on ’t. Dost thou not see him?

Gray. I cannot swear I do; but that may be

My lack of clairvoyance. Is that his home?

Hath he no other dwelling-place?

Morag (wildly.)

A thousand—

Where burns run brattling through the summer shaws

From linns and water-loups he sings to me:

And the brave mountain-heads he loves them dearly,—

It is the throne he sits on: the grey mist

That is his bed of state; from out its curtains,

He says good-morrow to his fere, the sun,

And holds blythe parle with me. And when, o’ nights,

I journey the black moor, he’ll bid the moon

Hang out her bonny bouet from the clouds,

Or come himself whizz like a shooting star,

And sit like Spunkie, swith on my left shoulder,

To light me through the quags and weary mosses,

Whispering brave things to me ! Sometimes he sends
 His kingly bidding by the lady owl,—
 And brawly can I read her bonny sang.
 And, when the clouds are skurrying through the sky,
 And strong winds warsling with the angry oaks,
 And drift leaves dancing through the tattered woods,
 That is our trysting-time. Then hand in hand,
 The lee-lang day, we thunder through the wood,
 And Houart shouts, and laughs, and talks with me.—
 'Tis that hath made me wise ! This day he showed me
 The wolf's cub in that crowd was slavering them,
 Till they fell downright mad. The old wolf and the fox
 Slunk slyly from their den, and when they passed,
 I spake to Houart, and he sent me, but—

Flies will buzz, and finches sing,
 And leeches soak, and adders sting ;

And so,

In that year, when the Black Hour
 Falls on Scotland, tarn and tower,
 Shall be slain a king in bower !

(Rushes out in repeating these lines.)

Stewart. What think'st thou of the king's wise woman
 now?—

Gray. Humph, 't were more tickle task to catch this
 Houart,

Than Donald Balloch, in a Badenoeh moss.

Yet, there seems straggling through her ecstacy
 A ray of meaning, could my duller sense
 But take it in. Be't drink or divination,
 Or simple lunacy, I cannot tell ;
 I am Sir Andrew, not Sir Œdipus,
 What says my king of Thebes ?

Stewart.
That she 's a cheat,
 Her luns are mummary, her prophecies
 A juggler's oracles to frighten fools,
 And catch them in her net. Were I her deemster,
 The horse-pond or the jougs should be her guerdon :
 So, I 'll report the king.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

Scene First.

ATHOLE—A NARROW PASS IN THE WOOD AT THE UPPER
END OF KILLIECRANKIE.

(*Enter from opposite sides SIR ROBERT STEWART and WALTER
LUVALE.*)

Stewart. Fellow, begone ! What dost thou skulking here ?
Tarry but one day longer in these bounds,
There 's not a jungle in the Athole woods,
There 's not a tod's-hole, nor a wild-cat's den,
From Birnam-braes to Rannoch thou dost hide in,
Shall save thee from my search and from my sword.

Luvale. I give thee back the *fellow*. For the rest
Thou need'st no search for me. Thou hast thy sword,
And here I stand before thee. Face to face,
And foot to foot, the firm sward under us,
And Heaven above us, for the on-looker,
Robert of Athole, do thy worst !

Stewart. And tilt with thee !—
Thou misborn wretch, tilt with thy cope-fellows,
My hinds or hounds ! thou art no mate for me.

Luvale. A belted knight is tilt-fellow for king.

Stewart A belted knight ! Who belted thee a knight ?

Luvalé. A brave man's arm, it boots not whose nor where ;
But meet we where we may, on good green-sward,
In list or battle-field, thou meet'st thine equal—
A spurred and belted knight.

Stewart. A belted knight !

A belfry knight ! old Bishop Cardyne's knight—
Some shaveling girded thee, for belt the cord
A begging brother wore ! Begone, I say,
For if to-morrow thou be found in Athole,
By good St. Fillan and his holy well,
To a wolf's death I'll hunt thee with my hounds.

[*Exit* STEWART.]

Luvalé (solus). Was ever wretch so worried for his life,
And for so simple cause ! that in her haste,
Or in her freak, nature hath gifted me
This finger all too much. Despite my pains
To shun encounter with this frantic tyrant,
Despite forbearance shown in other cause,
So persecution proof from holy church
Had won confessor's crown, if I do linger
But one day longer here, I doubt this madman
Will drive me in defence to mortal quarrel,
And so force true his weird, turn freits to facts,
And rants of beldames into prophecy.

I've saved the king ; high Heaven be praised for that !
Although I dared not tarry for his thanks ;
My nurse is safe, and my fair foster-sister ;
So now to drop an orphan's filial tear
On my poor mother's grave and the good bishop's,
Then Athole ! and my native land, farewell
For ever, for the sunny fields of France,
Where Charles and fortune woo and welcome me ! [*Exit.*]

Scene Second.

LOGIERAIT, THE KING'S CASTLE ON THE RIGHT BANK OF THE TUMMEL, NEAR ITS JUNCTION WITH THE TAY—AN APARTMENT IN THE ROYAL RESIDENCE.

(Enter the QUEEN, attended by CATHERINE DOUGLAS, and followed by SIR HERBERT MAXWELL.)

Queen. Thank Heaven! thank Heaven! But hast thou told me all?

Hide nothing from me, good Sir Herbert! pray thee!
Is he not hurt?

Max. I've told your Highness true.—
On my pledged honour as a Christian knight,
The king's not hurt, though his escape in sooth
Showed like a miracle. But fearing rumour
Should, with uncertain tale, alarm your Highness,
He sped me on before.

Queen. O will he learn him never
Wisdom, though peril preach! Vainly I minded him
How once before, in Castlecary woods
His life was 'dangered by that horrid sport.
Thank Heaven! that savage breed is nigh extinct.

Max. Ah, madam! 't is a glorious sport albeit,
And pastime for a king! A nobler prize
Ne'er started hunter from his forest lair!
O had your Grace but seen that gallant brute
Come thundering in his might! white as the snow,—

All but his horns seem tipped with ebony,
 His muzzle, and his crisp and curled mane,
 Black as the raven's wing,—his brandished tail
 Streaming like knightly pennon in a charge;
 His smoking nostrils as a furnace glowed;—
 His eyes two founts of fire! Forehead to earth,
 Trenching long furrows in the mountain's side,
 Headlong he dashed down hill! horsemen and foot,
 Scattering to right and left; the shower of lances
 Shaking like burdocks from his lusty flanks,—
 Tossing the mangled dogs howling to heaven!—

Queen. Where was the King?

Max. By evil chance, far down

The narrow gullet of a forest lane
 That had no passage thorough, jagged and jammed
 With rocks on either side, when the fell beast,
 In full career rushed on him!—to the earth
 Dashed his disbowelled steed—

Queen. Forbear, forbear!

It makes my brain run round.

Catherine Douglas. How was he saved, then?

Was it by mortal man?

Max. Madman or angel,

I cannot tell me which. He came like lightning—
 Like lightning vanished. I' the self-same instant
 That savage brute impaled his Highness' steed,
 Sprang a young hunter from the rock above
 Sheer on the monster's back, and plunged his dagger
 Behind his ear so deftly and so deep,
 He dropped that moment on the ground stone-dead.

C. D. O the brave youth! I love him from my heart.

Queen. He was not slain, I hope?

Max. Nor hurt, I think ;
But sooth I scarce can tell, for though I stood
With my Lord Athole and Sir Robert Stewart,
Not many paces from his Highness' side,
So swift he came, so suddenly he went,
I scarce, methinks, should know his face again.

Queen. I hope he will be found.

C. D. He shall be found,
Although Kate Douglas should transform to Dian,
A quivered huntress through the Athole woods,
Or scale the stony crest of Benyvrecky,
On search for him. And be there stuff in him,
Whereout the King can manufacture knight—

Max. What then ?

C. D. I do not know but I shall marry him.

Max. So be Sir Robert Stewart grant his leave.

C. D. With, or without thy leave or Robert Stewart's—

Queen. Nay, nay, dear Catherine ! thou 'rt not wedded so,
Hast yet no wifely fears. Where is the King ?

Max. I left him on return.

Queen. And who attends on him ?

Max. Only Sir Andrew Gray. Your Grace doth know
How, with a poet's and a painter's worship,
He dearly loves to ramble, unattended,
That glorious pass of craig and cataract
And sylvan savagery. I'm charged to meet him
And be his boatman at the Tummel's ferry.

Queen. O do not tarry, good Sir Herbert ! There,
So unattended in that perilous pass !
Foolhardy James, thou wilt provoke thy fate.

Max. Nay, good your Highness, what hath he to fear
In Killiecrankie woods ?

Queen.

Sir Robert Græme,

Dost thou not know that proud and desperate man
Hath his allegiance formally disowned
And writ defiance to the king; and sworn
Where'er he meets with him, armed or unarmed,
Without defence of privilege, to slay him
As he would slay a beast?

Max.

He will not risk

His outlaw's neck within the trap of Athole.
He's at the King's horn openly for treason,
And there's a tempting ransom on his head,
Three thousand golden demies to the man
Dead or alive shall bring him to the King.

Queen. Oh, in that rank and ravelled wilderness
A desperate man for months might bide his time,
Then at the vantage spring upon his quarry,
And laugh pursuit to scorn. Sir Herbert, pray thee,
Make haste to join the King!

Max.

Since your Grace wills it,
Though full assured his safety needs it not.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene Third.

KILLIECRANKIE—THE NORTH, OR LEFT BANK, OF THE GARRY,
NEAR THE UPPER EXTREMITY OF THE PASS—A DEEP,
SECLUDED, AND ROMANTIC DELL, AT THE BOTTOM OF THE
GLEN, OVERHUNG AND CLOSED IN BY WOODED PRECIPICES.

*(Enter KING JAMES and SIR ANDREW GRAY, the latter
surveying the scene with admiration.)*

*King (after regarding Gray's gestures of wonder and
delight for some time in silence)—*

There is the temple drew my steps aside
To play the pilgrim on our homeward way.
Is 't not a shrine is worth the visiting?
'T is said we rhymsters ever pass the true
In limning that we love, be our mood's idol
Dead thing or live, a landscape or a woman;
And hence, I fear, thou wilt not recognise
A spot hath often been described to thee.

Gray. It bursts on me as a remembered thing
I had seen shadowed in some glorious dream!
I ne'er have trode the Garry's glen before,
And yet methinks there's not a lichen'd ledge,
Altar, or obelisk, or quaint baptistery,
Or basin, rounded by the whirling wave,
Singing and smoothing on through centuries;—
There's not a precipice or splintered crag,
Nor oozy grotto, nor that stunt old oak,
All head and root, is clinging to the rock
As though it fed on stone;—nor that mad torrent

That rusheth down, as shouting in its might,
Nor that black eddie pool doth swallow it,
But I could swear I'd seen them all before.

King. It is the dell I oft would tell thee of,
Home-sick and sad, in Windsor's kingly keep,
When, as we gazed upon the scene below—
How proud! how fair! yet how unlike to this!
Contrast would shoot my fancy on the wing
And waft thee with her to the Garry's glen!

Gray. It is the same! I have it all by heart;
There's not a tree but hangs a story by,
Or cave but peers one from. That queer old oak
I've seen it oft five hundred miles away!
I'll take mine oath to it, it is the same
Did save Lord David Stewart's life.

King. Methinks
It hath not grown an inch these twenty years,
Nor added wrinkle to its corded crust!
My cousin lost his footing near the top
Of that bluff precipice, scrambling his way
To a gled's eyrie, by some hazels grew,
In the loose shingle of the rotten rock,
And had been dashed a dead thing in that pool,
Shot from so fearful height, had not that tree
Midway the sheer descent entangled him;—
My brother Rothsay cheered him from his perch,
To boldly leap into the linn below,
Where he swam, ready to defend his drowning.
He saved him; but to die more lingering death,
In London's tower, mine hostage unredeemed!
And thou, his rescuer, high-minded boy!
Thou, bold and beautiful! whose fiery blood

Brooked not thy crafty, craven-hearted uncle
 Should wield the sceptre of thy royal father,—
 Poor Rothsay ! better had it been for thee
 That thou hadst made the Garry's linn thy grave,
 Than live to dree, in Falkland's damned den,
 That horrible death, while widowed poverty,
 By stealth her beggar's dole of barley-meal
 Dropped through the bars to thee ! and gentle womanhood,
 From her own bosom, scanting her little one,
 Through the scooped reed dispensed the balmy stream,
 To eik thy wretched life ! Oh, hadst thou lived
 Like him, thine age-fellow, England's fifth Harry,
 The follies of thy fiery spirit purged,
 Thou hadst to after times bequeathed a story
 Had riched the poet's and the patriot's telling.
 I have avenged thee, my poor murdered brother,
 And turned our father's curse to prophecy
 Upon thy murderers. Wo, the necessity
 Was laid on me thereto !—Thy pardon, Gray,
 This scene hath waked sad memories in me.
 We'll talk of other things. Hast thou discovered
 Nought of that youth so bravely saved my life ?
 Strange he should shun the thanking of a king,
 For saving a king's life.

Gray. . . . None seemed to know him,
 So swift he came, so suddenly departed.
 And yet methought—it might be fancy though—
 He and Sir Robert Stewart bandied looks
 Tokened a more of knowledge than of liking.

King. Some lifter may be of the Athole beeves,
 Or intromitter with the Athole deer ;
 Would we could find him, though. What men are these ?

Ha, Græme!—(*drawing his sword*)—the traitor Græme!
stand on defence.

(Enter, their swords drawn, SIR ROBERT GRÆME, PATRICK GRÆME, and two armed followers.)

Gr. Ay, Græme, the traitor ! thy proclaimed traitor,
Whose knightly scutcheon thou hast trampled on,
Fouling the well-spring of his children's blood !
The outlaw Græme, upon whose head thou 'st placed
Thy mark and murder-price ! The wanderer Græme,
Whom thou hast robbed of house, home, heritage,
Turning his wife with all her little ones
To drift a barefoot beggar through the world !
The avenger Græme—the son-in-law of Lennox,
The brother-in-law of murdered Albany,
With all his wrongs red in his memory,
To whet his sword upon, hath come on thee,
Thou tyrant without peer or parallel !

King. Truly a gallant enemy, and a generous,
Brings four to foin with two !

Gr. Thou bloody tyrant!

We come not here to tilt in tournament,
Or knight with knight to play at chivalry.
I have disowned thee for my king—defied thee—
And redd thee of my bloody sacrament,
Attended, or alone, where'er I found thee,
On flood or field, in forest or in fane,
By onslaught or by ambushment, to slay thee
As I would slay a wolf. So thou art slain,
I reckon not where or how! And here I have thee
Penned past escape.

King. In God's name! Gray, then,

We've fought worse odds ere now. Remember Dreux,
 Its blood-red rampart, and our doings there
 Won the fifth Harry's praise! There is a rock,
 Set thou thy back to it, as I to this—
 My brother Rothsay played the hero here,
 His gallant ghost shall not look down on cowards!

*(They engage; GRÈME and one of the followers falling on the
 KING: PATRICK GRÈME and the other on GRAY. The
 KING and GRAY shout for war-cry, "ROTHSAY! ROTH-
 SAY!" their assailants, "ALBANY! ALBANY!")*

*(Enter hastily from the wood, his sword drawn, WALTER
 LUVALE.)*

Luvale. A war-cry shouted, and the clash of arms!
 Good Heaven! the King. St. Andrew to the rescue!

*(Places himself at the KING's side, and kills the fellow who is
 attacking him, as GRAY does the other. On observing
 which, SIR ROBERT GRÈME and his SON make their
 escape into the wood.)*

Villains! ye shall not 'scape.

King (seizing his arm). Nay, I command thee.
 Pursuit were vain through Killiecrankie Woods,
 And perilous besides. Thou'rt bleeding, Gray,
 I fear they hurt thee home.

Gray. A scratch—no more.
 I pray your Highness have escaped as lightly.

King. I am skin-whole. It had not long been so, though,
 But for our friend at need. The knaves were stout,
 And played their weapons well. Is it not strange,
 Twice on one day my life should have been rescued,
 As 't were by miracle!

Gray. By the same arm, too,
Or I mistake me.

King. Ha !

Gray. How livingly
His countenance brings back that scene to me !
As with his knife unsheathed I saw him dart
Like arrow down the rock, and heard the groan
The monster heaved ; and the next moment spied him
Upon his perch again ! wherefrom he gazed
An anxious instant, as to make him sure
Your Grace was safe, then, like a streak of mist
Melts on a summer's morn, even in the looking at,
Evanished from my sight !

King (*cordially grasping Luval's hand*). Brave youth !
hast twice

Been my good angel on this day—to find thee
Is worth the risk we run. But why didst thou
Not tarry to receive the thanks I owed thee ?

Luval. For that, my liege ! no thanks were due to me ;
I did me nothing but with the like 'vantage
Any leal subject in thy realm had done.

King. But thou didst vanish as it were a deed
It shamed thee to have done. Thou hadst no enemy
Dangered thy stay ?

Luval. There's one doth make my tarrying
In Athole perilous.

King. And who is he ?

Luval. I pray thee, good my liege ! to pardon me.—
My quarrels are not worth the ear of kings.
By stealth I came to Athole, and by stealth
I meant to pass away. Your Grace's leave
That I may now depart.

King. Nay, stay, I charge thee.
Twice thou hast saved the King of Scotland's life ;—
Lives there in Athole who shall dare to show,
Or dare to say he is thine enemy ?

(Luvalde shakes his head distrustingly.)

I know Earl Walter, my good uncle, is
A jealous keeper of his forest deer,
Some wandering buck, perchance, on Benygløe
Thine arrow may have hit.

Luvalde. Never, my liege ;
I ne'er have been a stealer of the deer.

King. For youthful frolic thou hast joined a band
Of gillie-glasses, from the Moray braes,
To drive a spreath of heifers from Strathgarry.

Luvalde. The stouthrief robber, and the filching thief
I hold at equal scorn. I ne'er, my liege,
Have been a poacher or a cateran.

King. Thou 'rt young and hot in blood ; how much thou
art
A master at thy weapon I have seen ;
In sudden broil at fair or funeral,
Or trysted meeting with a clan at feud,
Thou 'st slain thy man,—his kin is rife in Athole,—
Or thou hast heard that the First James of Scotland's
An austere king, a putter down and punisher
Of these brave old time usages ; a tyrant
Heads his own kindred, spares not high-born ladies,
So they turn law-breakers, but sets perforce,
Like thrifty dames to ply the spinning-wheel,
For penance in Tantallon or Inchcolm,—
Prisons proud lords, were island kings at home ;—
Nails horses' shoes to heels of Highland loons ;—

Hangs gentlemen of genealogy
 On gibbets by the score at Inverness,
 For lifting beeves, or harrying helpless widows,—
 And other things most horrible to hear!
 Hadst thou arrived but a few minutes sooner,
 Thou 'dst heard his dittay and his deeds at large
 All duly catalogued and charactered
 By an authentic tongue. Thou think'st I am—

Luvale. A just and noble prince, whom but such evil-doers
 None else have need to fear—wouldst curb by law,
 A lawless race hath had no curb but will,
 No bound to will but brute necessity!
 From whom the humblest hath redress aggrieved,
 The highest judgment on convicted wrong!
 Were Scotland's nobles but like Scotland's noblest,
 Then innocence might walk abroad unarmed,
 And Athole would be safe as Holyrood!
 I've done me nought needs make me fear the king.

King. A flatterer, too! i' faith thou 'rt courtier born,
 And must to court. Doth he not gloze already
 As he had run his court apprenticing?

Gray. But that he 's mixed some handful of the true
 Doth spoil its perfectness.

King. Forbids thy mystery
 Disclosing of thy name?

Luvale. My liege, my name
 Is Walter Luvale.

King. Luvale,—In this realm
 It is a rare but a right worthy one,—
 There have been brave men of thy name in Scotland:
 Witness James Luvale fought so gallantly,
 And fell at Harlaw with the Ogilvies,

And the chief names of Angus, Mearns, and Mar,
In that so bloody but so glorious fight
Against the rebel Donald of the Isles—
Art thou of kin to him?

Luvalé.

He was my father.

King. Thou hadst a brave man to thy father then.
Methought his race had perished with himself.

Luvalé. His lands were harried and his castle burnt
By that fierce Highland host. My mother 'scaped,
And with one sole attendant, by wild paths
Crossing the hills for refuge with her uncle,
Old Robert Cardyne, Bishop of Dunkeld,
In a lone hut amid the Athole mountains
Was ta'en in labour suddenly. It chanced
The shepherd's dame of that rude shieling nursed
Her babe some three weeks old; and while my mother
Balanced for weary months 'twixt life and death,
The kindly dame from her own bosom fed
My new-born life. Under the bishop's roof
Long two-and-twenty years we lived his guests,
His cherished children rather, till, for cause
It needs not tax the royal time with telling,
Some three years gone I left my native land
To seek my fortune in the wars of France,
Wherein at Baugè, and at Verneuil,
So fatal to our Scottish chivalry,
Mine uncle Thomas Luvalé had achieved
An honourable name. Sir Patrick Ogilvie,
Was made Lord Constable of Scots in France
After Lord Darnley's death, for some slight service
Was pleased to knight me on the battle-field,
And so o'erblazoned me to the French King,
He's named me captain in his Scottish Guards.

King. How art thou here, then ?

Luvale. On brief leave obtained,

Over my mother's grave and the good bishop's,
To drop a pious tear, and place my nurse
And foster-sister in some safe retreat,
I sailed from France in that ill-fated ship,
Was wrecked at Penmark on the Breton's coast,
Carried my friend, the builder of my fortune,
Sir Patrick Ogilvie.

King. Alas, poor Ogilvie !

Scotland doth weep his loss, and Scotland's king,
As of her bravest, wisest, worthiest.

Luvale. My duty done, I'm hasting my return,
Lest it be over-due.

King. The Queen must see thee,

Else night nor day shall I have peace from her ;
Nor will her missive to the Dauphiness
Nor mine to Charles, and to my son-in-law,
The Dauphin Lewis, mar their bearer's fortune.

(*Enter SIR HERBERT MAXWELL.*)

Maxwell, thou here ! This is not Tummel Ferry.

Max. Fearing some danger did way-lay your Highness,
The Queen commanded me.

King. The Queen's a witch, then :

I'll nail a horse-shoe to my chamber's door,
And stick a sprig of rowan in my bonnet.

Gray. Or, haply, her fast friend, the spaewife, taking
Her daily precognition of the clouds,
Has read our tussle there in hieroglyphics.

King. Who was 't ordained all witches should be burned ?
Was 't not old King Macbeth ?

Gray. I think me not.

But he it was did pass the law, ordains,
“Fules, minstrels, bards, and sic like idle folks,”
Be forced to learn some honest craft to live by,
Or yoked, like aivers, in the plough and harrows!

King. Ha! ha! It was. But thou and I, remember,
Play we the bard, the minstrel, or the fool,—
As sooth, our ingine somewhat tempts to do—
Have the “*king’s privilege*.” Thou didst omit
To cite that saving clause. I fear the Queen’s, though,
But a green witch. She had not sent us Maxwell
To th’ rescue, else, so late. But here’s thy substitute
Hath tumbled timely from the moon to us.—
A brave one, too. Know him—Sir Walter Luvala.
Now, homeward haste we, to relieve the Queen.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

Scene First.

ATHOLE—AN APARTMENT IN THE EARL'S RESIDENCE.

(Enter ATHOLE, a scroll of parchment in his hand, which he has been reading.)

Athole.

Omens and oracles

Crowd rife and ripe on us! In divers places
I' the three months' frost, curdled to compact ice,
Their wine and ale were sold i' the solid piece!

In the mid month of June, at three o' the clock,
All over Scotland fell so pitchy darkness
By near an hour as 't were midnight at Yule!

Strange things to chronicle—and stranger still
To chronicle foreseen!—(*musings*)—When these things fall—
How reads the prophecy?—" *That year in Scotland
There shall be slain a king.*" If they could prophesy
The signs so certainly, might they not also
The thing's to follow them? "When a king's son
Of Bruce's blood, the brother of a king—"
My brothers Albany, Stratherne, or Buchan,
This much had fitted them.—But what comes after?
"Whose son shall dy an hostage for a king"—

That fits but only me ; and he it fits
“ Shall dying wear a crown.”—That cruel deed,
Young Rothsay’s murder, for the house of Albany
Did seem to clear the way. For doing it,
The house of Albany o’ershadowed mine
Hath perished, root and branch !

And now these prodigies,
So strange adversatives to nature’s rule,
And yet so all foretold ; so timing, too,
With Græme’s outlawry and sworn sacrament
Of deadly reckoning with his sentencer,
Outlawing his outlawer !—

Our title’s perfect. (*unfolding the scroll.*)
Græme shows it here in clear demonstrative
Of logic and of law. Elizabeth Mure
Was concubine, not queen. No mockery
Of marriage forms following my mother’s death,
Could blanch of bastardy the brood begot
Outside of wedlock’s pale.—In hiding Græme
There is no treason done. I do but shield
A life by gifted seers, in old-time oracles,
Foretyped Heaven’s instrument, the Crown of Scotland
To rightly place on the true owner’s head !
Græme is our star of hope—our destiny
Is webbed with his. We stand or fall together.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE SECOND.

THE SAME—THE GLEN OF BRUAR—A WILD AND RETIRED SPOT
NEAR GRÆME'S HIDING-PLACE.

(*Enter SIR ROBERT STEWART and SIR ROBERT GRÆME
in conversation.*)

Græme. It marvelled me that thou his chamberlain
Tarriedst behind in Athole. But ha ! ha !

Stewart. What moves thy merriment ?

Gr. I was comparing

My blasted fortunes with this lucky upstart's
Thou hast been telling of—I, an earl's brother,
An outlaw in the woods, have a brock's hole
My bield and biding-place ; he, from his muck-hill,
A butterfly at court !—wishing I carried
Finger or toe exceeds the complement
Since luck doth lacquey superfluity !

Stewart. That misbegotten wretch ! where'er I turn,
Like toad or adder on my path, I find him.
Devils and oracles are leagued with him
To cross me every way. He must be crushed—
Till I have set my heel upon his head—
While he has life there is no life for me.

Gr. Not if ye meet at that forbidden ford
As 't is most like ye shall. This Highland castle
The king affects it much. And well he may—
It sitteth royally ; and near thereby
Two rivers join, the Tummel and the Tay.

But I forget; thou art an infidel,
A mocker of that faith.

Stewart. Strange things have fallen
To shake my scoffer's creed : that fearful wind
And that more fearful frost—the *Black Hour* next—
That monster on four legs, and this on two !
All uncouth things, old crones and Lollard leeches
Were burnt for heresy foreprophesied
Long ere they fell to pass ! I do believe
They have anointed him to weapon-proof ;
Given robe or ring transports him at his pleasure ;
Taught rhymes throw glamour o'er the sense of men,
And drinks and philtres witch the love of women.

Gr. Is he so much a favourite at court ?

Stewart. To be so checked and chidden and admonished
Before the whole court too ! who am his cousin—
In royal blood his equal.

Gr.

Say his better.

He's of the bastard blood, thou 'rt of the true.

Stewart. And for this monster-born, this eleemosynar,
This foundling of the moors.

Gr.

Thou that wert held too

So most his favourite, all did resort to thee,
Had boon to beg or grace to supplicate.

Stewart. That star is set; and yet I thought he loved me.

Gr. So did thy cousin Alexander Stewart,—
So did Earl George of March ; yet o' the sudden,
The one he slew, the other he hath beggared.
The cat at romps will frolic with his prisoner,
And pat the plaything he designs his dinner.
The Queen, is she caught too ?

Stewart.

He is her chamberlain !

Gr. 'Tis prompt promotion !

Stewart.

And when I alone

Refused hail-fellow ! to this dunghill knight—
For Patrick Ogilvie, he says, had knighted him
Upon some foreign field—before them all
He made him kneel, and begged my sword, and strake him.
And bade him rise Sir Walter Luvalé, knight,
And each knight there salute him as a brother !

Gr. And did ye do 't ?

Stewart.

Dunbar, and Gray, and Maxwell,

Like true court-spaniels, licked his hands and fawned ;
I on protest, as bidden by the king,
Did lightly touch 't, as I would handle toad,
And the cursed sword had dubbed him knight, that instant
Shivered and flung away ! I've craved me leave
To tarry some time here, but never purpose
Back to his court again.

Gr.

Nay, nay, thou must

Back to the court, and soon. There's bideth there
A one that thou wouldst slay, and one that I—
And both must die or neither. Nay, start not ;
I say that both must die. If either live
Thou art a man walks doomed. If Luvalé lives
Thou may'st forget that prophecy ; he will not,
And hate will hasten weird. Or slay thou Luvalé,
The king slays thee : nay, if he lives thou diest,
Be Luvalé slain or no. That moment thou
Brakest thy sword as desecrated thing,
Thy death was written in his soul's dark chamber :—
When did he pardon an offence like that ?
Nay, hadst thou done it not, he stands in danger,
Stands in his fence of fear. In the last Parliament

He made us swear allegiance to his Queen.
Men deemed it strange; but there was purpose in 't,
Ay, and deep policy.

Stewart. He doats so on her;
Was there aught else but that?

Gr. It was not that;
'T was pre-installing her i' the regency;
For though he feigns to make his mirth thereat,
The prophecy that weirds him dead this year,
He inly doth believe, and trembles at it.
He knows thy grandsire's next his son by law,
In blood before him; that for hate men give him
That nickname the old Irish gave their Brian,
The *Tax and Tallage King*. He knows the nobles
For choice would have thee king. In this new minion,
And in this slight of purpose thrown on thee,
Methinks I read the opening of his play,
His tragedy of Albany, new cast
For the descendants of Euphemia Ross.

Stewart. He's not so jealous of our house, think'st thou?

Gr. My Lord of Athole would have had thee wed
One of the princesses, thy royal cousins:
Of kingly line, repute his favourite—
Why said he nay to that?

Stewart. Nay, I must clear him
In justice there. He knew my wishes in 't,
And that I loved elsewhere. The black fiend flay him,
He hath bewitched her too!

Gr. Fair Catherine Douglas?

Stewart. It mads me more than all. The scornful minx!
And for this miscreate—this brownie's bastard—
This monster bears the devil's own finger-mark!

But mine she shall be! ay, tho' King and Queen,
And monks and monsters, and the devil's dam,
Armed with old prophecies.—There are in Athole
Whate'er I dare devise, dare execute,
Were it to sack St. Johnstoun, or to burn
Old Abbot Oswald, and for funeral pile
His friar's rookery.

Gr. She shall be thine,
And a king's couch to bed her beauty too,
So thou art ruled by me. Persuade Earl Walter
Arm me three hundred of his trustiest followers,—
To steal a fair young maiden from the court,
Your gillies will account as brave a pastime
As lifting heifer from a lowland strath—
And more they need not know. Post thou to court,
And smooth thy brow, and play Sir Chamberlain
As gay as thou wert wont. The thing's decreed,
And with the end so are the instruments;—
Thou shalt have thy revenge—I shall have mine.—
And for the lady, she may be thy Queen,
Or concubine, as the Fourth Robert wills it.
I pray thee, move Earl Walter in this matter,
And well bethink ye that it cost the Bruce
A deadlier venture to achieve a crown,
Whereto he could not plead so clear a title!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene Third.

ANOTHER WILD SPOT IN THE SAME GLEN, CLOSE TO GRÆME'S
HIDING-PLACE, NEAR THE LOWER FALL OF THE BRUAR.

(*Enter GRÆME and CAHOUN.*)

Græme. Ay, ay, I'm sure o' them—I know my men ;
I've thrown my anchor in a place will catch.
Old Athole's half a fox, and half a fool ;
I've crammed the fox with law, the fool with prophecy ;
He hath a double and a diligent stomach,
It will digest them both. For Robert Stewart,
He'll back to court again. I have unhived
A swarm of hissing hornets in his brain,
Pride, envy, anger, vanity, and lust,
In deadly buz ! and the queen-bee ambition,
Will teach them where to fix their mortal stings.
We'll have revenge, Cahoun ! and with revenge,
Honours in Lammas flood !

Cahoun. These red-shanks, think'st thou
That we may trust to them ?

Gr. What Athole bids them
They'll do, nor stand on why's, were it to burn
The Blackfriar's monastery, and roast the monks,
And sup the Abbot sodden into broo !
It needs not for the nonce, we strain obedience
To this high-pressure-proof. They'll think 't is pastime,
What in their mountain-creed is held no sin,
And what indeed doth under-plot our play—
Snatching a winsome damsel from the court

For their young master to the braes of Fender
 To be his lady-love. Come to my den,
 I'll give thee letters for the Halls, the Chambers,
 And others safely may be trusted to ;
 I've planned it all, time, place, and circumstance,
 To the day, the hour, the minute, more imports
 Each actor knows his play with perfectness. [Exeunt.

Scene Fourth.

KILLIECRANKIE.

(A high and rugged range of rocks betwixt the Tummel and Garry, commanding a view of the pass in its whole length as well as of the open country in the surrounding district. On one of the boldest peaks, MORAG discovered as if watching the motions of some one in the distance.)

Morag. The henchman's up the hill to John o' Lude—
 Ho! ho! ho! ho! There's one, two, three,
 Duncan of Faskil, Farquhar of Fonab,
 And now black John o' Lude. Ha, ha, old fox!
 I rede, I rede, I rede. It's not a bridal
 When ye're the bidden guests: no, nor a tinchel
 To fank the silly deer! The hoodie-crow,
 O bravely kens she that. When ye're at the busking,
 She's at the singing; caw! caw! caw! she wots
 There's flesh meat i' the wind. Heigho! heigho!
 But I'm forfainn with walking. I'll go sleep.
 Sleep, fye! fye! fye! no sleep. The wolf wons yonder,

And the wolf's cub. The old fox and his whelp,
 They're trysted to his feast. There's blood i' the banquet,
 And so I'll watch, watch, watch! Houart commanded me.

And Houart is a spirit brave—
 I charge thee tell me where
 The wild wolf wons? I' the Bruar's cave
 There is the wild wolf's lair.

* * * *

Three weary days o'er moss and moor,
 The hose but and the shoon—
 And when the day grew on the doure,
 Our bouet was the moon.

He'll not believe me. Yet thou camest from England
 Hot-foot enough, Sir King! I warrant thee,
 To kill these Albanies when I sent for thee.
 They would not hang the hell-hounds, though I told them,
 But called me mad, and hoo'd their hounds at me;
 And in their banquet hall I saw him sit
 And feast, and laugh, the merriest man was there,
 Who (*shuddering*).—But poor Morag's dead; when it was done
 Her body fell to pieces! Houart tells me
 They cannot force the spirit nor defoul it.
 And so he lent me this brave body, skims
 Mountain and mere light as the falcon's feather,
 And laughs at frost and fire, spotless and white
 As the sky snow before it's touched the earth.—
 My poor old mother, and my father! hoo! (*Shuddering.*)

His hair was like the fine fine lint,
 Is dusted o'er with snow;
 The oaken staff on which he bent,
 It grew in fair Glencoe!

“ They ’re wondrous old, and they ’re a cold,
 That old man and his dame ! ”
 And then they laughed, these revers bold,
 So merrily i’ their game.

They took them brand, and lowe ! lowe ! lowe !
 The thatch it blazeth brave !
 That old man and his dame, I trow,
 Their hearth-stone is their grave.

And oh ! was ’t not a sight of pride,
 These comely brothers three,
 With sword in hand stretched side by side,
 Stark on the bloody lea !

Their sisters twain,—

(Covering her face with her hands.)

My bonny, bonny sister !

Aye weeping, weeping, weeping ! Well for thee
 That thou canst weep ! the lady rowan tree
 Is growing ’on thy grave. I could not weep,
 So hied me to the king. He hanged them all !
 And these proud Albanies too—ha ! ha ! ha !
 But now they ’ll kill him next—that sly old fox,
 The wild wolf and their cubs. So Houart tells me—
 For

“ In the year when the Black Hour
 Falls on Scotland, tarn and tower,
 Shall be slain a king in bower ! ”

He ’ll not believe me though ; heigho ! heigho !
 But what o’ that ? love-service for love-service !
 And so I ’ll tell the Queen—

(Looking out.)

Another bidden !

Ho! ho! Sir Henchman! thou dost shank it bravely!
No hill 's too stay, no linn too deep for thee!
But I will show thee I can run an errand
As fast and far as thou—for Houart bade me
To watch, watch, watch—and then, ha! ha! ha! ha!
For bonny St. Johnstoun, it 's down by the Tay!

[*Exit.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

Scene First.

PERTH—THE GARDENS OF THE BLACKFRIARS' MONASTERY
SURROUNDED BY A LOW WALL, BETWIXT WHICH, AND THE
OUTER (OR CITY) WALL, THERE IS A MOAT.

(*Enter CATHERINE and ELIZABETH DOUGLAS, the latter with
a bow and arrow in her hand, accompanied by GRAY,
MAXWELL, and LUVALE.*)

Eliz. No doubt ye would—that is, ye 'd promise it—
For so requires your courtier's catechism—
Or shoot me midges, or ride after wild geese
From John O'Groats to Greenland, if I bade ye !

But I'm too learned i' the court Sanscrit, sirs ;
Your Hellesponts, and Alps, and Apennines,
And polar snows, and sands of Africa,
I can translate them to the laic tongue.

Gray. And how, fair Brahmin ! reads our Sanscrit, pray
thee,
Done to the vulgate and vernacular ?

Eliz. Ye 'll swim the Hellespont ; that is, so be
No pond or ditch is near, is deep enough
To float the fat Leander of the herd

Would seek his Hero on its farther side,
To put your vaunting to the water-proof.

Ye'll scale me rock so perpendicular high
The wild cat shies it; and the breeding eagle
In doubt of the vertigo dares not build on't,—
That is, so ye be stationed on plain ground
Whence may be spied no more precipitous steep
Than wheezy abbot may ride up at speed,
Maugre his asthma and his last night's supper.

Ye'll wade neck deep thro' pits of polar snow,
But take good heed the safe bravado's made
When the crisp grass is frizzling in the dog-days!

And burning sands of Africa uncheered
By freshet or green bush, unshod, unbonneted,
Ye'll course them bravely, as ye wipe your lips
New steeped in mazer of cool Malvoisie!
But, as I know your court infirmity,
I will not tax you to the scale of promise,
But condescend to your weak faculty.

*(Advancing to the garden wall and shooting her arrow slant-
ingly across to the other side.)*

There, fetch me that without the warder's leave,
And claim the guerdon then.

*(GRAY and MAXWELL look at each other and burst into
laughter.)*

Gray. No make-believe, though:
No formal mock court shadow of a kiss,
But a substantial yeomanly transaction
Authenticate by sound.

Max. Whose clear report—
Eliz. Shall set the echoes on Schiehallion longing,
Be not the fault thine own, Sir Trumper.

Gray. A tempting bribe, Maxwell! Wilt try for it?

Max. (*Looking at the moat, and shrugging his shoulders*)—
Nay faith, 't was Luvalé won the prize at leaping.

Eliz. I bar his trying tho'; ye were the braggarts.

Max. The moat—

Eliz. Fye! fye! 't is nothing but a ditch.

Max. The ditch, then, is confounded broad. Its waters
Not very deep, 't is true; but then, their bed—

Eliz. Is not a hard one. It will break no bones.
'T is just the bed your sage Egyptian courtier,
In old King Pharaoh's time, Sir Crocodile,
For choice would sleep in and for luxury.

Gray. A soft sweet hammock of succumbent mud.
But say 't were possible to leap across,
Must we so back again?

Eliz. That's the condition—
There is no bargain else.

Gray. I' faith, for me, then,
Sir Cupid may go grope for his own arrow.
To leap down might be tried—but to leap back
Against this wall—I am no water-rat,
I am for being buried on dry land,
And liefer would have worms than eels to eat me.
Sound sleep, Sir Crocodile! and pleasant dreams:
Wear thy soft coverlid ungrudged for me!

(*LUVALE takes GRAY and MAXWELL aside, and whispers to them.*)

Max. Across the ditch!

Luvalé. Even so. I witnessed it
Not half-an-hour ago, as chance I sat
In the close arbour there behind the juniper.

Gray. Who had the charge?

Luvale.

Cahoun and Thomas Chambers.

And when the fellows carried them had gone,
They tried them on the ditch. They bridge it still.

Gray. Planks laid across the ditch—

What means it, know'st thou?

Luvale. I cannot tell. I guessed me some repairs
On the moat's dyke against to-morrow's sports.

Gray. Ho! ho! fair lady! then, look to thy lips!
Don't tell it her. (*Aloud*) Ho! Maxwell, for the arrow!
Now for eye-service; for lip-service next. [*Exeunt.*]

Eliz. (*calling after them.*) When ye are chin-deep in that
fat black gruel,
And have a modicum of your mud-bath,
Be sure you hollow lustily! For when
We hold you duly dubbed, we'll fish with boat-hooks,
And drag ye out, my gentle knights of Nile!
And now, my longing pair of cooing turtles,
Have I not done that cleverly to serve you?

Luvale. To serve us; how?

Eliz. Have I not purchased you,
That ye've been sighing for this livelong day—
A cozy tête-à-tête? There is no saying
But I myself one day may need the like,
And, therefore, have I done the good Samaritan.
Now, Cupid, give you grace to say your say,
Or sigh your sigh, or kiss your kiss at leisure—
Don't garble them for haste. 'T will be good hour
Or ere mine arrow-hunters will disturb you.

(*Runs off.*)

Cath. Stay, stay, Elizabeth; dear cousin, pray thee—
Was ever such a mad-cap?

Luvalé. Rather say,
More sober wisdom, more considerate love,
Mantled in mirth's undress—
There was a purpose in her playfulness :
Your cousin's jest but hit my thought in sadness.
There's something on thy mind. In this day's revels,
That were of all the gayest and the merriest,
I marked but two whose brow wore cloud on it—
The good Queen and thyself. There is some mystery
Is shared betwixt you both. If it be aught
Threatens the King, her Highness, or thyself,
I dare not boast, to prank my proffered service,
A statesman's schooling or experience ;
Nor may I vaunt me of my soldier's sword,
'Tis girt too new for that ; but if a heart
Will cheerly spend the life that's lodged in it,
For each or all, make me confessor meet
For so dear confidence, command and trust me.

Cath. Luvale ! thou must to France.

Livale.

To France !

Cath.

Nor tarry

For taking leave—the Queen will pardon it :
Depart this very night.

Luvale.

Doth Catherine Douglas

Wish my departure, then?

Cath.

The Queen—

Luvale.

But thou—

But dost thou wish it too ?

Cath.

I have what cause

To wish 't, the Queen has, and a cause besides,
That she wots nothing of.

Luvale (*walking about, agitated, and speaking to himself*).

They were the two

Alone, resolved me to remain in Scotland,

'Gainst weighty reasons said their nay to it—

And now the life-shoots of the heart I've struck

Fondly and far into my native earth,

They bid me rive them with a mortal wrench,

And thrust in foreign mould! (*To CATHERINE DOUGLAS*) Sir

Robert Stewart—

Is he not cause of this?

Cath.

He is.

Luvale.

I guessed so.

To please thy lover thou—

Cath.

To please my lover!

Luvale. 'Tis known he loves thee. My Lord Athole's
heir,—

The cousin of the king—his favourite—

Failing that child, his heir.—Beyond the sea

He drove me once before, thro' Athole, hunting me

As they would hunt a wolf. Methinks 'tis hard

To be thus bandied between France and Scotland,

Because I hap to have for enemy

One is too mighty to be checked by law,

And too ungenerous to be swayed by honour!

But that thy lips, the lips of Catherine Douglas,

Should be his messenger!—

Cath.

Were Robert Stewart—

What all the saints defend he e'er should be!--

Scotland's liege lord, and woo'd me for his queen,

I would not answer him in otherwise

Than I have done to-day.

Luvale.

To-day!

Cath.

When I

Refused to hear his suit, was pressed more closely,
 More freely, and more insolently bold
 Than e'er he dared before, and angrily,
 Answered, I know not what,—his fury thundered
 Into a storm of bedlam blasphemies,
 Still makes my blood run cold! Amid the hurricane
 Of frantic imprecations hurled at thee,
 'Spattered with names of scorn, and against them,
 The fated fools did foster thee, he dropped
 Mysterious hints of black and fearful import,
 Touching to-morrow, when the dainty mammet
 Scorned him to-day, would be right fain to supplicate
 To be the concubine of Robert Stewart.—
 Luvale, thou must to France.

Luvale.

As for myself,

I stand his feud. But them did foster me,
 Said he, the fated fools—

Cath.

It was his phrase—

Luvale. There may be danger there. The king's too fear-
 less.

His guards are billeted among the citizens
 Too sparsely for the call of sudden need.
 Who hath the watch to-night?

Cath.

Hall and his brother.

Luvale. I think they're honest, yet I would Dunbar
 Had it, or I; I'll go walk round the walls,
 To see an' all be sure, then speak Lord Angus,
 My Lord of Orkney, and the king's most friends,
 To pray his Grace—

Cath.

Hush! hush! they've found the arrow;

I must begone. Thou wilt not then to France?

Luvale. No, not a foot ; not though Sir Charles of France
Did bribe me with his staff of Constable.

Thou 'st spoken that spell-fasts me here in Scotland,
Fixed, as the strands that to her mountain's side
Tether her native oak ; the king's in danger,
And Catherine Douglas loves not Robert Stewart !

[Exeunt severally.]

Scene Second.

THE SAME—THE CITY WALLS NEAR THE PRINCIPAL GATE.

*(Enter, in conversation, SIR WALTER LUVALE and
SIR JOHN HALL.)*

Hall. Well, well, to humour thee ; and I will charge
My brother, too, look warely to his watch.
But, sooth, to-night, I meant to join your revels,
And grudge me sorely to be baulked, and all
For this new whimsy—for I guess it so—
Of our good English Queen. She cannot see
A knave on horseback sway his switch of hazel
But she imagines it a brandished dagger ;
Or spy a shaggy herdsman from his hill,
Wrap in his rachan from the snell nor'-east,
But she transforms him into Robert Græme,
Fumbling his dudgeon in his mantle's fold ;
Nor hear a bagpipe at a rustic wedding,
But straight she dreams of Highland hosts a-gathering,
Rebels, and risings, and conspiracies,—
And falls a swooning for her dear lord's life !

Luvale. Was 't but her whimsy that conspiracy,
Drew the king off so suddenly from Roxburgh?

Hall (*starting, and eyeing Luvale for a moment with a look
of inquiry and suspicion, but seemingly reassured*).

Some say it was, and some say it was not;
For me, I cannot tell. But for this night
Thou mayest go soundly sleep, Sir Chamberlain,
And vouch thy royal mistress, Sir John Hall
Will answer freely with his neck, to-morrow,
For every traitor, or one's more a traitor
Than is himself, shall enter Perth to-night. [*Exit* LUVALE.
Needless bravado if our plot miscarry,
And safe if it succeeds! 'Tis well we're ready
Ere the Queen's evil catch! I pray, Sir Pointer,
Thou snuff thy rounds out ere the gloamin's done;
For an thou scent our wild red Athole deer,
Are padding now upon the hoof from Methven,
Sir William Crichton, and Sir Robert Lauder,
And their fell hounds, the jailor and the hangman,
Will have fresh venison, I trow, to-morrow! [*Exit.*

Scene Third.

SCENE CHANGES TO AN OPEN SPACE IN FRONT OF BLACKFRIARS'
MONASTERY.

(*Enter hastily* MORAG, *covered with dust, and exhausted
as after a long journey.*)

Morag. Heigho! heigho! but I'm before ye yet!
Ay, loon by loon I counted them, three hundred!
Like cats i' the grey, creeping to Methven wood,

By twos, and tens, and twenties !
 To steal a bride ! fye, fye ! Black John o' Lude,
 And Farquhar Cam—busk ye such foresters,
 After such deer ! To hunt the girdel mouse,
 Hound ye the mountain wolf ! Bravely I wot
 The bride ye 're looking for. Your winsome marrow
 Hath hair upon her chin, and for a curch
 She wears a crown !

*(Looking up to the windows of the apartments, which are
 brilliantly lighted, and from which music is heard.)*

Torches and tapers ! piping and taboring,
 Harping and minstrelling, in dead men's chambers !

(Looking out.)

Ho ! here 's a brother of their black covyne ;
 This night-hawk harbours in the royal dove-cot.
 Christopher Chambers ; ay, he served the Albanies
 That day they chased me from their castle-gate,
 And set their dogs at me, because I told them
 How he, that hell-hound i' their banquet-hall,
 Sat a chief guest, hoo ! hoo ! *(shuddering.)* Woe 's me ! woe 's
 me !

It 's a black day for thee, Sir James of Scotland,
 When Albany's doers keep thy castle's key !

*(Enter, with the key of the Monastery gate in his hand,
 CHRISTOPHER CHAMBERS. He advances slowly, with a sad
 and abstracted air, without observing MORAG, and pauses
 before entering.)*

C. Chambers. Hell hath me hand and foot ! Thrice I
 attempted it,
 To warn King James to-day. Some cursed chance

Did ever thrust between to baffle me !
 Stewart, Cahoun, my brother, and the Halls,
 Dog him, like hunters closing round their quarry,
 Or keen-eyed eagles keep the stag in view,
 Limp to his brake to dy !

For long ten years
 Of his own chamber, fostered, friended, favoured,
 Yet sworn to take his life ! Some gracious angel
 Shield him this second time ! I, vowed his enemy,
 Am won his friend ; yea, from my heart's core love
 The brave, kind master I am leagued to murder !

(MORAG, *who has overheard him, springs suddenly forward, and seizes his arm.*)

Morag. But thou 'lt not do 't. Thou wilt not murder him.

Chamb. (*starting, and drawing his sword.*)

Ha ! eaves-droppers ! pshaw, 't is some crazy wretch.
 She wots not what I mean.

(*Proceeds towards the gate.*)

Morag. Thou 'lt let me in—

I am in haste to speak with him.

Chamb. With whom ?

Morag. James Stewart, King of Scotland.

Chamb. What wouldst thou,

I pray thee, with James Stewart, King of Scotland ?

Morag. I have a message for his private hearing—
 There's none may hinder me—'t were treason else—
 There's life in it or death.

Chamb. A likely messenger,
 To post on life and death ! I'm of his chamber,
 Will thou not trust it me ?

Morag. Thou 'rt not his cousin ?

Chamb. I am his cousin's friend.

Morag. Who was the king,
The selcouth women stopped upon that moor,
Near by the Moray's Firth?

Chamb. I think Macbeth.

Morag. Who slew his king and cousin?

Chamb. Ay, what then?

Morag. There's bloody work toward—

Chamb. (aside.) There is indeed :—
But hast thou wot thereof? (*Aloud*) Robert of Athole
Is cousin to our king. Thou wouldst not say—

Morag. He came from England when I sent for him,
And hanged the hell-hounds all! Love-service for love-ser-
vice!

Chamb. But who hath sent you with this message?

Morag. Houart.

Chamb. Houart, I pray thee, who is he?

Morag. A king.

Chamb. And of what kingdom?

Morag. Of the mere and mountain.
Three days and nights in the brown moors he fed me
But malt or meal; made me a bed of heather;
And when I felt foot-sore upon my journey,
He sent me his brave chariot, yon grey cloud—
Thou seest I am not tired!

Chamb. Alas! poor wanderer,
Thy looks belie thee, then.

(*Aside*) She is but mad,—
There was no meaning in her speech; but still
Her idle fancies seem to ever harp
Some danger to the King. The Queen is timorous,—
Might not this crazy wretch by indirection

Be made mine instrument, and so inoculate
 The Queen with fears, that to forfend the false
 They might prevent the true ?

(*To MORAG*) Good woman ! follow me.

[*Exeunt together into the Monastery.*]

Scene Fourth.

INTERIOR OF THE MONASTERY.

(*The royal apartments. They are brilliantly lighted and crowded with courtiers. At one table the QUEEN is playing chess with the EARL OF ATHOLE; LORD ANGUS and SIR ROBERT STEWART looking on. At another a party of courtiers engaged in the game of tables (or draughts). More in front the principal group is listening to a band of musicians, who, in a recess of the apartment (concealed from view) play some pieces of ancient Scottish music. This group includes the KING, the EARL OF ORKNEY, SIR ANDREW GRAY, SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, SIR WALTER LUVALE, with ELIZABETH and CATHERINE DOUGLAS. When the music has ceased, ELIZABETH DOUGLAS goes into the recess in which the musicians are stationed, but returns immediately.*)

Eliz. They cannot play that air I liked so well,
 Your Grace invented last. But is it true
 You heard it in a dream ? Sleep hath, I know,
 Its proper organ ; 't is an instrument
 I've heard full oft fair ladies practise on ;

But ne'er, I own, did relish much the music
The minstrels drew from it ! But royal slumbers
Are lulled, 't would seem, to sweeter symphonies !

King. Makers and minstrels plead the privilege
Of dreaming in both kinds.

Eliz. How in both kinds ?

King. Awake and sleeping. But your lord of dreams,
Whoe'er he be, hath no respect of persons :
For sooth to say my last night's dreams were not
Of sounds celestial, but infernal discords,
Of hissing serpents, crawling and cursed things,
Loathly and venomous ! That horrid dream,
It makes me shudder still.

Eliz. What dreamt your Highness ?

King. Methought the reptile, an enormous serpent,
Lashing my body in his clammy coils,
Sprang headlong with me to his noisome den,
Deep underneath the ground, a hideous hole,
Dark, dank, and fetid with Tartarean smells.
Vainly I struggled in his strangling clasp,
His poisonous breath so palsied soul and sense,
I could not cry for help. At length his neck
Curving aloft in air, the monster snake
With a shrill hiss darted his forky fang
Full at my throat. I made a desperate bound,
And waking found me on my chamber's floor
In a cold dew, trembling from head to heel !

Max. Now, by St. Colm ! is it not passing strange !
I am not given to dreams. My whole life long
I have not dreamt a score ; yet last night I
Had a most frightful too.

Eliz. Then out with it !

In dreams, as in discourse, I love the merry ;
 But here 's a listener, my gentle cousin,
 Affecteth the sublime, and most of all,
 When it doth kinder with the horrible,—
 Flies over steeples on a griffin's back,
 Parleys o' nights with caterwauling ghosts
 Under the gibbet tree ; with rapier's point
 Doth toothpick's office to the crocodile—
 Dream me a dream so charming horrible,
 And I will wager me thou didst—

Max.

Did what ?

Eliz. Didst eat last night a most superfluous supper,
 And for confessor need'st the apothecary !

King. Is that the poetry of dreams ? Now, Maxwell,
 Thou 'st heard the cause, deliver the effect.

Max. Would my sage doctor of the cap and kirtle,
 Thou hadst my supper and my dream with it
 For sauce to aid digestion ! Thus it was then :
 Methought we were again in Athole's forest
 Hunting the mountain bull. Our sport was brave,
 And we had slain, so seemed, a noble brute,
 After a gallant chase, when as we crowded
 Around the fallen beast, scanning with wonder
 His bulk, his brawn, his beauty, o' the sudden,
 He sprang bolt upright on his legs unhurt,
 And laughing loud, " Dost thou not know me, tyrant ?
 I am Sir Robert Græme !"—

Ork. (*Grasping MAXWELL's arm, and pointing to the table
 at which the QUEEN is playing.*)

Fye ! Art thou mad ?

If thou must tell thy foolish dreams, speak lower.

(MAXWELL is silent.)

King. And what ensued ? He smote me as sheer dead
Upon the instant, as thy listener there,
Sir Walter Luvale, did his prototype,
That day he saved my life. Was it not so ?

Max. I think it was ; but sooth I scarce can tell,
For with the fright I woke so suddenly—

King. Even as thy cook composed thy last night's supper,
So did thy fantasy thy last night's dream.
He dressed thee a new mess—a heavy one,
For so thy dream bewrays, of old materials
Minced and mixed up, suet and spice—

Eliz. What ! Maxwell,
A haggis, as I live ! Didst sup on haggis ?

King. So did thy fancy out of old events
Compound the crude concoction of thy dream,
Of a false history making, so at least
Beldames will swear it thee, true prophecy.

Luvale. Yet dreams, my liege, albeit not prophecies,
Though but wild shuffles of our waking thoughts,
And windy shadows of our waking acts,
May warn at times of duty or of danger.
If Maxwell's dream persuades your Highness more
To guard your life against the traitor's dagger,
What lacks him of a prophet's fame or fee
A grateful nation shall o'erpay the patriot.

Orkney. Luvale speaks true, my liege.

King. Oh, ye have heard
The Rhymer's rede they troll about our streets,
Betides this year a king is slain in Scotland.

Luvale. Such prophecies do oft fulfil themselves—
They light a purpose in a madman's brain ;—
They lend a courage to a villain's arm,

Till a blind guess doth quicken to a cause,
And turns a random rede to history.

King. Who in our last week's revels was 't we chose,
And crowned for king of love?

Eliz. Sir Walter Luvale.

King. Sir King of Love! then 'ware that prophecy.
There are two kings in Scotland, thou and I,
Look to thy life and warily, for wete thee
I mean to do to mine—

Luvale. Grant Heaven it be so;

And to that end I pray for a beginning,
They who are trusted with your Grace's safety
Be lodged together within call of need,
And not dispersed among the citizens.

King. We 'll talk of that to-morrow. The meanwhile
Here is a new romaunt is sent to me,
Writ by Sir Hew of Eglinton, who sings
As bravely as he fights. But we 'll disturb
These gamesters else,—so pray ye come within
And I will read it you—

(A tumult is heard in the outer court, and loud voices as quarrelling.)

But Stratoun, ho!

(Enter STRATOUN.)

What sudden hubbub 's here?

Stratoun.

'T is that wild woman

Did stop your Highness on the pier at Leith.

King. There 's none molesteth her?

Strat.

I found her struggling

With Thomas Chambers and Cahoun, demanding

To see your Grace upon a thing of haste

Had life or death in it. She would not tell it me.

King. Bid her disclose it to my chamberlain.

Strat. I named him too; but then her fury foamed
Into a storm of madness, and she showered on him
Curses and evil names, and spake of things
So black and damnable, it made my flesh
Grue, and doth make it still, to think of them.

King. Some crazy crotchet that infects her brain,—
I'll speak with her to-morrow—tell her so,
And charge Cahoun and Chambers use her gently.

[*Exit STRATOUN.*]

(*The KING and those with him retire out of view, into the recess or side-room that had been occupied by the musicians. SIR ROBERT STEWART, who has been anxiously listening to the conversation between the KING and STRATOUN, quits the apartment hurriedly, as soon as the KING and his party have disappeared.*)

Scene Fifth.

FRONT OF THE BLACKFRIARS' MONASTERY, AS IN SCENE THIRD.

(*The gate of the outer court opens. CAHOUN and THOMAS CHAMBERS are forcing out MORAG, who resists, although feebly, as one exhausted with fatigue. STRATOUN follows them.*)

Strat. I pray thee now, he'll speak with thee to-morrow:

(*Offering some silver.*)

Here's will provide thee bit and bield till then.

Morag. Away! it's hush-money! it's arles for treason!
There's blood on it; ye are his murderers.

Chamb. (shaking her roughly)—

Thou foul-mouthed hag! an' thou not hold thy peace
We'll tight thy thrapple with St. Johnstoun's tippet.

Strat. Nay, use her gently, 't is the King's command.

[*Exit STRATOUN.*

Morag. To-morrow thou wilt speak with me, James Stewart.
Where shalt thou be to-morrow—where shall Morag?

(*Enter from the Monastery SIR ROBERT STEWART.*)

Stewart. Off with the devil's dam! To the ditch with her,
Fling her head foremost in to sink or swim,
'T will show an' she be witch.

*Morag (after looking steadily for some time at STEWART,
and as to herself)—*

The bride he beds with,

I wot is growing in the Torwood yet,
And he's a gruesome carl will buckle them—
But not a friar o' them, black or grey,
Can tie a faster knot. 'T will be brave bridal,
And thousands to look on.

Stewart. Whose ban or bridal,
Thou devil's druerie! art muttering now?

Morag. There will be spurring ere the broose be won,
And staucherin steeds; and by they clear the ford—

Stewart. What then?

Morag (pausing and looking expressively at STEWART)—

No Athole-Stewart shall be Athole's lord.

Stewart. Hell hag, thou ly'st! There shall be lords of
Athole

Of Stewart's name, and kings of Scotland too,
When thou art carrion, meat for curs and crows.

Morag. The worst is last! Ay, ay—Of Athole's blood
No Stewart ever shall be Scotland's king.

Stewart (*lifting his sword to strike her*)—
Ha! sing'st thou, hell-bird?

Cahoun. Nay, my Lord, beseech thee,
The wretch is dying. Keep thy steel unbloodied—
Remember that 's to do.

Stewart. They 're breaking up—
The lords will pass this way—this ominous magpie
She will keep chattering still. Away with her,
And fling her carcase in some ditch or dunghill,
Where she may rave or rot.
(*Exeunt CAHOUN and CHAMBERS, forcing MORAG off the stage.*)

Now skaith for scorn
Bonny Kate Douglas and my cousin king!
Call to the rescue an' it boots ye now
Your Jack o' the moors, your many-fingered minion,
Your knight o' the mushroom armed with oracles,
And rhymes, and redes, and lying trumpery.
I'll meet him at that ford of Acheron,
Where'er it be, and try conclusions there,
Shall prove if Erceldoune or Robert Stewart
Be soothest seer: For thus I prophesy,
Despite the drivel of this dying witch,
That Stewarts shall be lords of Athole still,
And Athole's blood shall be the kings of Scotland. [*Exit.*]

Scene Sixth.

A NARROW STREET, OR WYND, IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF THE MONASTERY—MORAG IS DISCOVERED ON THE GROUND DYING.

(*Enter hastily from the farther end of the street, as advancing towards the Monastery, SIR WALTER LUVALE.*)

Luvale. The watch deserted! Neither to be found
Hall nor his brother! There is worse, I fear,
Than mystery in 't. (*Observing MORAG.*)

Whom have we here? a woman!
Some dying wretch.

Morag (*speaking to herself*)—

To-morrow, O to-morrow!
That black and bloody morrow! James of Scotland,
Did I not redd thee an' thou crossed that ferry
Back on the live thou never shouldst return?
But it's true saying, weirded men are wilful!
Come late, come air, there's no eschewing weird.
It will repent ye, Sirs, I trow, to-morrow,
Ye would not let me speak with him to-night.

Luvale. It is the woman asked so earnestly
To speak the King. Poor woman! thou art ill,
Cheerly I'll bear thee to—

Morag. The King! My blessing,
The blessing of poor Morag be on thee

For that kind word! But oh, fast, fast, beseech thee—

Faster than malkin ever fled from hound—

Faster than ouzle ever fled from hawk—

Or we shall be too late. For oh, I'm weary,
And dizzy, dizzy—and they're yonder, yonder—

Luvale. Who's yonder?

Morag. Robert Græme.

Luvale. Nay, my good woman,

Thy wits are wavering now—

Morag. Wae's me! wae's me!

I doubt they waver whiles, and gar me trow

Things that be not. Yet loon by loon I counted them,

Fast foot and heavy hand, a full three hundred

From Athole's braes, crouching like wild-cats yonder

For the dead spring.

Luvale. But where?

Morag. Among the bushes

Ayont the garden's ditch.

Luvale. They cannot pass:

The moat is broad and deep.

Morag. There's planks on it—

Luvale. Ha! that is guessed like truth! I marvelled me
These planks were laid. Who comes! What, ho, Dunbar!

(*Enter SIR DAVID DUNBAR.*)

I'm glad thou'rt come. I fear there's treason doing.

Dunbar. Upon King Houart's affidavit, is't not?

Vouched by his envoy, Lady Wisdom, there?

Thou know'st her man, dost not? 'Tis poor mad Morag,

The spaewife of Lochaber.

Luvale. Wood or wise,

She's told me that so lends suspicion circumstance,

It makes the worst surmise the likeliest.

There's not a soldier upon watch to-night
On all our city's round.

Dunbar. Where's Sir John Hall?

Luvale. I cannot find him, nor his brother neither—
I doubt me Græme's within the walls in hiding,
And Hall conjunct with him. Come, rouse we haste
The nearest citizens. Poor wretch! (*to MORAG*) I'll send
Anon shall care for thee. [*Exeunt LUVALE and DUNBAR.*]

Morag (sola). Love-service for love-service!
That's Morag's wage. But oh! I'm weary, weary!
I wish I were on Inverlochy braes,
In my own glen among the broom and brackens;—
The corrie's burn would croon me to my rest,
And they would lay me down beside her, under
That bonny rowan-tree! And we would sleep
Soundly, my sister! soundly. I'm right fain—
It's weary world when there is nought to do—
And Morag would have nought to do to-morrow,
But to the hills and weep! (*Listening anxiously.*)
Hist! hist! not yet—

It's Morag must go first.

(*A light like the blaze of torches flashes suddenly, and MORAG
by a desperate effort starts upon her feet, exclaiming*)—

O help! help! help!

Thy weird is come on thee; wake James of Scotland.

O villains! villains!

(*Attempts to run out, but falls and expires, exclaiming*)—

Treason! treason! treason!

Scene Seventh.

THE ROYAL BED-CHAMBER—THE QUEEN WITH CATHERINE
AND ELIZABETH DOUGLAS STANDING BEFORE THE FIRE-
PLACE, AS LISTENING ANXIOUSLY.

(Enter to them the KING in his night-gown and slippers.)

King. Did ye too hear that noise? I think my knaves
Be in their cups, and fallen to fisticuffs—

Cath. No, no; to me it sounds the hurried tramp
Of men have harness on. *(A blaze of light.)* Kind Heaven!
what's that?

Queen. Oh! 't is Sir Robert Græme.

King. I doubt this time
Thou hast guessed true. He takes me unprepared—
(Looking about for something to defend himself with.)
I've not of steel might pare an apple's rind—
Here's for a time— *(Attempts to fasten the chamber-door.)*
Good heavens! it will not turn.

The lock is damaged. Ha! the bolt removed—
Then there is treason in 't!

*(A loud shriek is now suddenly heard from the farther extremity
of the long corridor or passage, leading to the banqueting
hall, and STRATOUN retreating towards the KING's cham-
ber is heard calling Treason! treason! his voice becoming,
by degrees, fainter and fainter, till at length it ceases*

altogether, and a sound is heard as of something falling heavily against the outside of the bed-chamber door, which the KING still keeps shut.

Queen.

Oh! heark, my Lord,

'Tis Walter Stratoun's voice.

King.

My faithful page!

Oh! had I but wherewith to 'venge thee on them,
And sell my life, as should the King of Scotland!
But to be cooped and slaughtered in a shambles!

Cath. (placing her shoulder against the door, and pointing to the window)—

There, there, my Lord! We're not the bird is wanted—
And I have found a bolt will keep this staple.

(Thrusting her arm into it by way of bar.)

Eliz. What, Catherine, art thou mad?

Cath.

It fits it, cousin—

Go thou and help the King.

King (after attempting for some time, in vain, to loosen the stancheons from the window)—

They've newly battled them—

There's not a bar will yield. Ha! *(Looking at the floor.)*
underneath

There is a vault. It has, I think, an opening
Into the outer court. Had I but tool—

And *(Snatching the massive tongs from the fireplace.)*
—Here's may serve a need.

(With a desperate effort he succeeds in forcing a plank from the floor, making an aperture large enough to admit his person. The conspirators assail the door of the bed-chamber with violence.)

Eliz.

Haste, haste, my Lord!

(The KING leaps down into the vault. The plank is replaced, and some rushes thrown over it by ELIZABETH DOUGLAS. The conspirators now enter the apartment led by SIR ROBERT GRÆME, CATHERINE DOUGLAS, with her arm broken, being dashed against the floor, on which she lies in a swoon. The QUEEN stands stupified with terror in the middle of the apartment, and ELIZABETH DOUGLAS places herself on the plank by which the KING had made his escape.)

Gr. (on entering)—

Albany! Albany! now thou bloody tyrant!
Not here! the bird is flown!

Chamb.

O do not fear it;

His cage is barred too well; and there's not cranny,
Closet, or cupboard in this monkery

Where cat might creep, or rat take sanctuary,
But I do know them all. Here's the brood-hen,

I'll first make sure of her. *(Offering to kill the QUEEN.)*

P. Gr. (arresting his arm)—

Shame on thee, Chambers!

A woman, fie!

Gr. Mind not the wolf-dog's litter,

First find the wolf himself.

[Exeunt the conspirators.]

Scene Eighth.

A CORRIDOR, THE BODY OF STRATOUN LYING NEAR THE
ENTRANCE TO THE ROYAL BED-CHAMBER.

(*A noise is heard as of persons rummaging the chambers in all directions in search of the KING. After some time the voice of THOMAS CHAMBERS is heard behind the scenes as from the royal bed-chamber, exclaiming*)—

Chamb. Ho, Sirs! What ho! the bonny bride is found
That we have come and carolled for all night;—
There, Sir John Hall! Look down! Now, by my faith,
Thou 'st leaped it bravely! and thy brother too,—
Ye 'll have the handsel hug!

(*Violent struggling heard in the vault.*)

The fell fiend worry him!

He hath them down! I' faith, Sir Robert Græme,
Thou 'rt come in time—I think he 's strangling them.

Scene Ninth.

THE ROYAL CHAMBER, AS IN SCENE SEVENTH.

(*The plank has been removed, and CHAMBERS, CAHOUN, and other conspirators are seen surrounding the aperture, holding torches so as to throw their light into the vault. Violent struggling heard below*).

Gr. (*in the vault*)—

Confessor, did'st thou say? Thou shalt have none

But this good sword. And mercy ! begg'st thou mercy ?
 Like mercy have thou as thou shewedst on them, —
 On Lennox, Albany, and Robert Græme.

(Stabs the KING repeatedly, then comes hastily forward to the mouth of the vault.)

Fie ! help me out this hole ; it stifles me.
 Hall ! sheathe thy knife. I cannot finish it—
 This is mere butchery.

Cahoun. But thou must finish it.

T. Chamb. It must be done.

Gr. Must—fellows ! must—

Come, then, and do 't yourselves.

Cahoun. Till it be done

Ye come not up alive. We 're all dead men,
 An' he be not.

T. Chamb. Ye pledged your knightly oath
 To my Lord Athole and Sir Robert Stewart.

(Noise as of a struggle in the vault, followed by a deep groan, and the sound as of a body falling.)

Gr. Well, well, that darg is done. Put up thy dagger.
 And now, ye ravening and remorseless dogs,
 Have ye had blood enough ? Help out this shambles !

(The murderers are assisted out of the vault. They are besmeared with blood ; and all, especially the two HALLS, bear the marks of a desperate struggle. Loud shouts are now heard from without, and enter hurriedly PATRICK GRÆME.)

P. Gr. Away, away ! the citizens are roused,
 And arming hastily, come swarming on,
 With Luval and Dunbar.

Sir J. Hall.

Dunbar and Luvale !

Then, by my faith, no May-game will it prove.
These are no swaggerers from their night's carouse,
To ringlead a street-brawl. Where is Earl Walter,
And Robert Stewart ?

P. Gr.

At their horses' speed,

Off to the North.

Sir J. Hall.

Then to the North let us off after them,

While ports are free and darkness has our secret—
Else will they smoke us here like bees in byke,
Or knock o' th' pate like bullocks in our pound.
How says Sir Robert Græme ?

(To GRÆME, who stands abstractedly gazing down into the vault.)

But ha ! what ails thee ?

In tantrum or in trance ? What lookest thou on ?
See'st thou a vision there ?

Gr. (as speaking to himself.) Since Robert Bruce

We've not had such a king. Hadst thou but harness on,
All three we had not done 't.

Sir J. Hall.

What, then ? Because

The man was stout, must these same three who slew him,
By thrice three hundred tarry to be butchered ?
Our backers both have fled.

Gr.

Our backers backed us

But with a huxter's heart. Their bauble's down—
Let them do play for 't an' they like, say I,
And all the saints to speed ! But fight or flee,
Sit they on dais, or swing they from a tether,
Recketh not Robert Græme. The game he played for
Is past the spoiling. He hath slain the slayer—

To deadly reckoning he has brought his debtor—
He has revenge, and he is satisfied.

P. Gr. Away! away! They 're thundering at the gate ;
I hear the war-shout of Dunbar and Luvalle—
To the Garden-Port ! else shall we all to-morrow,
Wag on the Inch for earrings to the gallows.

[Exeunt hastily the conspirators.]

END OF ACT IV.

A C T V.

Scene First.

ATHOLE—A NARROW ANGLE OR POINT OF LAND AT THE JUNCTION OF THE RIVERS TUMMEL AND GARRY—ON ALL SIDES ARE DEEP WOODS, RISING IN AMPHITHEATRE, AND TERMINATING EITHER IN LOFTY PEAKS OR IN A BOLD RANGE OF NAKED ROCKS.

(*Enter* SIR ROBERT STEWART *and* THOMAS CHAMBERS.)

Stewart. The doe turned lioness! It is a miracle
Thou tell'st me of. This timorous English woman
Started and swooned, chanced but a leaf to drop
Or twitter on a tree, grown o' the sudden
So fell an Amazon!

Chamb. As she inherited
Her husband's spirit with her husband's saddle,
She hunts his slayers to the death, and with
A spirit royal and resolved as his
When he pursued the slayers of his brother.

Stewart. We should have flung our banner on the breeze,
As Græme advised—proclaimed their deed as ours—
A thing to glory at—rallied around us

The friends of Albany, Stratherne, and Lennox—
And all were malcontent—recited boldly
The reasons ruled us in his taking off,
And stood upon our rights. Throve we or no,
That had been dared like men ! But thus like vermin,
Hunted from hedge to hole ! I'll tell thee what—
There's roomy bounds enough i' the Athole woods
To play at hide-and-seek. But I'm resolved
To skulk no longer like a fox in furze,
But face my foes in day. And come the worst
'Tis better dying in the bannered field
With harness on my back, like one has under it
The blood of Robert Bruce, than swing for show
To a vile crowd at Edinboro' cross,
Or have mine head hewed off with rusty hatchet
On Stirling's Castle knowe. There is thy warrant—
(Giving his ring.)

Summon all followers of our house to meet me
At Fascal-point on pain of death to-morrow,
Before the sun has set.

Chamb. Though their main chace
Follow Lord Orkney and Sir Herbert Maxwell
To the wilds of Mar after Sir Robert Græme,
I have not heard them name Luvale or Gray
Among his hunters. Luvale is native here,
No hole to hide in but he knows through Athole,
Better than thou or I. And then to stir
The devil in him, there is that oracle
Thou wottest off. Here is a ford, and scant
A bow-shot off, Tummel and Garry meet—
So till to-morrow keep thee close in cover,
He may be prowling near.

Stewart.

Would Heaven he were !

And stood before me now ! For there be things
This spot remembers me. That hazel copse
Fringes a fairy semicircular nook,
Fast by the Tummel's fall, where the coy shriek
Of maiden squeamishness might pass unheard
Amid the shoutings of the cataract—
It hath a history. His buxom foster-sister,
My rare love-spoil, 't was there he rescued her
Perforce from me, disarmed, dishonoured me,
Flung my snapped sword into the gulf, and bade me
Bless the kind luck endowed my ruffian's veins
With Bruce's blood, else had he flung myself.

In these woods, too—the day be cursed !—it was
The chance befel raised him, this peasant slave,
To be the minion of a court, to beard me,
And do me deadlier wrong. He robbed me, Chambers,
Robbed me of her, for whom I had refused
The daughter of a king ! Oh ! were he here,
With all his pedlar's pack of prophecies
For whetstone to his sword—
And all his fingers and his fords to boot—

*Chamb. (starting and looking round, then hastily drawing
his sword)—*

Be 't Heaven responds thy wish, or hell,—look there !

*(Enter suddenly from the Wood SIR WALTER LUVALE and
SIR ANDREW GRAY.)*

Stewart. Ha ! like the devil invents thee oracles,
Comest thou at naming of ?

Luvale. Robert of Athole,
Yield thee my prisoner !

Stewart. Thy prisoner !
 And who, I pray thee, noble knight of air !
 Commends me to thy worshipful jailorship ?

Luvale. God's law and man's, for that thou hast done
 treason.

Stewart. Against Sir Walter Luvale of that Ilk,
 And the dame Catherine Douglas, his fair lady,
 Who lacks an arm as he exceeds a finger—
 It makes the tally even.

Luvale. Thou heartless villain !
 Makest thou thy scoff at that, wert thou not fiend
 Had made thee worship her ? Traitor and coward !
 That slender arm, so brittle and so brave,
 Performed the service had beseeemed thine office
 And manhood to have done. She was before
 A woman, noble and young and beautiful,
 A king might love : now she is more—a martyr,
 An angel saint for men to supplicate,
 To speed their suit to heaven !

Stewart. And so, Sir Bachelor,
 O' th' Spartan order of the furnished finger,
 The gentle fileher craft, to speed thy suit with her,
 Thy one-armed saint, this angel lacks a pinion,
 Thou 'dst drag me to her feet thy prisoner,
 To show how deftly her six-fingered knight.
 The devil hath clawed to do the catchpole's office.
 Thou many-fingered slave ! lift thou but one of them
 Against thy lawful king—

Gray. Ah, well-a-day !
 And is our royal grandsire then deceased,
 Walter the First, of famous memory ?
 His reign methinks was brief.

Stewart.

Arede ye fellows,

Ye deal not now with threescore years and ten,
As my Lord Angus did, or fools have faith
In freits and oracles, and man-grown monsters,
And fields and fords, where roads or rivers meet.

Luvale. In freits and oracles! Needed an oracle
Teach me to thread these woods, or find me ford
Where roads or rivers meet, thou wert that oracle :—
For, like a beast of prey, here hast thou hunted me
In deadly chase, till through the bounds of Athole
Was not a savage haunt, a cleft, or hole,
Where wounded thing might bleed or burrow in,
River to ford or swim, ravine or precipice
That might avail me on the pinch of need,
But like the hounded fox I knew them all!
And this because I rescued from thy lust
A shrieking mountain maid. And when a king,
A generous king, my simple act of duty
Repaid at royal over-rate, the life
Thou dared'st not strike at openly, thou didst
With scorn essay, and stinging mockeries,
To make it burthen me. And, crowning all,
Thy loving kinsman, and thy gracious King,
Pampered thy life-long with his benefits,
Chose thee his chamberlain, his chief familiar,
His son-in-law, hadst thou but will'd it so,—
When, like a pick-lock thief, him—thou he had trusted so,
The keeper of his bower,—in bower unarmed,
Betrayedst to crouching cowards, struck at him
As dunghill curs worry a chained lion,
That thou mightst steal his crown,—talk'st thou to me
Of weirds, and fords, and bedlam oracles,

And count of fingers over complement,
The hazy hatchings of distemperature,
As if they needed me to find, or found
To drag thee to thy doom!

Gray (to CHAMBERS). And thou, good rascal,
Companion of the same right hangable order!
I pray thee let thy tool have holiday
Till these have played their play—or by the rood!
Thy womb shall scabbard this. Some ancient scores
They have to settle that concern not us.

And now, Luvalé! now—

I will not baulk thee of thine heart's desire—
I will not cumber thee with needless help;
The prayer I've heard thee pray an hundred times,
Behold it granted! on the firm sward of Athole
Thou hast him foot to foot. So man with man
Your battle's wager, wage ye to the outrance,
And Heaven uphold the right! This cur, I'll muzzle him.

(*LUVALE and STEWART fight. After a desperate combat,
STEWART falls to the ground wounded, his sword struck
out of his hand.*)

Stewart (to LUVALE). Take my life, fellow! for I scorn to
hold it

On fee from such as thou.

Luvalé. Thou art my prisoner;
But for thy life I may not take me it—
That is a sacrifice. It needs an altar—
The judge for priest, for it is due thy country.

Stewart. Yet tremble, traitors! our avenger lives.
Græme is at large.

Gray. Then, an' he be at large,

It must be dangling over Stirling bridge :
For, thanks to Duncanson and John Gorm Stewart
Took them in Mar, father and son are prisoners
To my Lord Orkney and Sir Herbert Maxwell,
As fast as thou to us.

Stewart. Can the devil prophesy
Falsehood, yet fate ! mocking alike with contraries,
The scoffer scorned him, and the dotard trusts—
Belief and unbelief ? So much for oracles,
Show truth by halves only to bait damnation—
So sports the sophist fiend with all who serve him !

Gray. Nay, there thou wrong'st thy friend. He spake
true oracles—

Thou didst his work, but wouldst not take his warning—
Bolting the boon, and boggling the condition.
For that like wayward and forbidden child,
Thou wouldst be trespassing where rivers meet,
And tempting fords, where men grown monsters haunt.
Hence comes thy weird. For "Cross thou but this ford,
No Athole Stewart shall be Athole's lord."
'Tis well, our Rubicon's not drowning deep—
To give thy devil his due, he riddled honestly.

(Blows his bugle. Enter a party of armed men.)
Hand-gyve and horse, for the Queen's prisoners !
Then, ho ! for Holyrood.

[Exeunt STEWART and CHAMBERS guarded.]

Scene Second.

EDINBURGH CASTLE—THE COUNCIL HALL.

(The Chancellor, Sir WILLIAM CRICHTON, seated at the council-table, surrounded by the EARLS OF DOUGLAS, ANGUS, ORKNEY, SIR ALEXANDER LIVINGSTON, SIR GILBERT HAY, SIR WALTER OGILVY, and other Lords of the Council. At the bar, as prisoners, the EARL OF ATHOLE, SIR ROBERT GRÆME, SIR JOHN HALL, PATRICK GRÆME, THOMAS HALL, THOMAS CHAMBERS, and CAHOUN. In the background, a dense crowd of spectators. A clerk at the table has just finished reading a paper.)

Athole. A crown of iron!—on these hoary locks!
To murder mockery!

Crichton. 'T was thine ambition
To dying wear a crown—the hope that hearted thee
To truck with oracles and damned deeds,
Connive to damned ends. 'T will teach the lookers-on
How keeps the devil troth with them that trust him.

Thy doom must needs confess 't, Sir Robert Græme.
It is a terrible. But monster crimes
Bring monstrous reckoning, treason and tragedied
With a foul murder.

Gr. I confess to neither;
There was no treason, nor no murder in 't.
He was no king of mine. I did disown him

By letters openly, as ye wot all,
 Sealed with my seal of arms, defying him
 To slay me or be slain. As he did me,
 So did I outlaw him. He hunted me—
 I waylaid him. 'T was life for life between us,
 And he began the fray. I have but slain
 God's creature was mine enemy, as he
 Would have slain me. Had he been winner, tell me,
 Time-serving tools to this kin-slaying tyrant,
 Would ye have righted me, taken his life
 In quits for taking mine, or doomed the tortures
 Against the laws of Scotland and of nature
 Ye have decreed on me? My flesh may falter,
 And pain may trap my tongue to blasphemy;
 But I appeal the Judge will judge us all,
 It was my frenzy not myself blasphemed,
 And ye compelled the sin.

For you, vile many (*To the crowd*

of spectators)

Have hooted Robert Græme, and hunted him
 As ye would hound was mad, and who will troop
 To look upon his dying, and will count
 Each start or shriek as the hot iron hisses,
 Or the fell pincer fangs some nicer part,
 Gazing upon his agony as ye
 Would on a show shuts up a holiday—
 The day will come when barefoot to his tomb
 Ye 'll flock for pilgrimage—do penance there,
 And pray for his soul's rest. And when they speak
 O' winter nights around the ingle's blaze,
 Of Scotland's worthies, of the brave Macduff,
 Slew that usurper king at Dunsinane—

And William Wallace with his right arm red
 With blood of Heselrig, and Robert Bruce
 Smote the false Comyn at the altar's foot—
 Then will they speak of Robert Græme, and match
 His deed's renown with theirs—
 A feller tyrant I have slain than they,
 Had pity never upon sib or freme.
 The deed is done. I have received my doom.
 And were that deed to do, that doom foreknown.
 I'd do the deed again.

The two Halls. And so would we.

Athole. For me, while lives my grandson, Robert Stewart,
 I will not falter in my faith, that Heaven
 Foreseeth all things, and foreshoweth many,
 As seen of late to strike the doubters dumb—
 The half-accomplished will accomplish all.

(*Shouting heard outside: Enter an Officer.*)

Crich. What means that shout?

Officer.

On the hill-tops to north,

From the Weets of Baiglie on to Arthur's Seat,
 Lights answer lights, a stream of beacons blazing.
 Announces tidings.

Crich.

Haste inform her Highness

That the last traitor's ta'en, Sir Robert Stewart ;—
 It is the signal was agreed upon.

How fares thy faith, my Lord of Athole, now?

Athole. O be they calendared the devil's priesthood
 Invent these oracles—their dupes for dotards
 Swallow for gospel what the fiend indites !
 His truths come never in the trower's sense,
 In nothing real, but the deed of sin
 They damn the doer by.

Angus. Scotland's First James,
Her glory and her shame ! never had king
Kinsmen more treacherous, and never king
Had trustier, truer friends. We have avenged thee
With swords were consecrate in thy brave blood—
And now one terrible act of justice done,
Scotland, though sad, may raise her loyal shout,
God save our king, the Second James of Scotland !

THE END.

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